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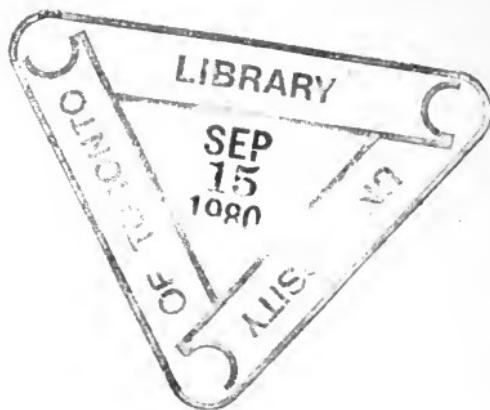
STORIES
FROM
SHAKESPEARE.

BY

MARA L. PRATT.

AUTHOR OF "AMERICAN HISTORY STORIES."—"YOUNG FOLKS' LIBRARY OF AMERICAN HISTORY."—ETC.

BOSTON:
EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING COMPANY.
1890.



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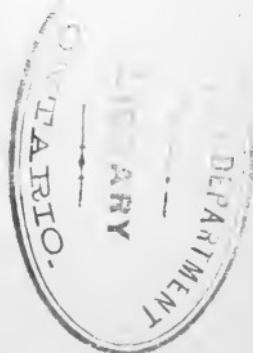
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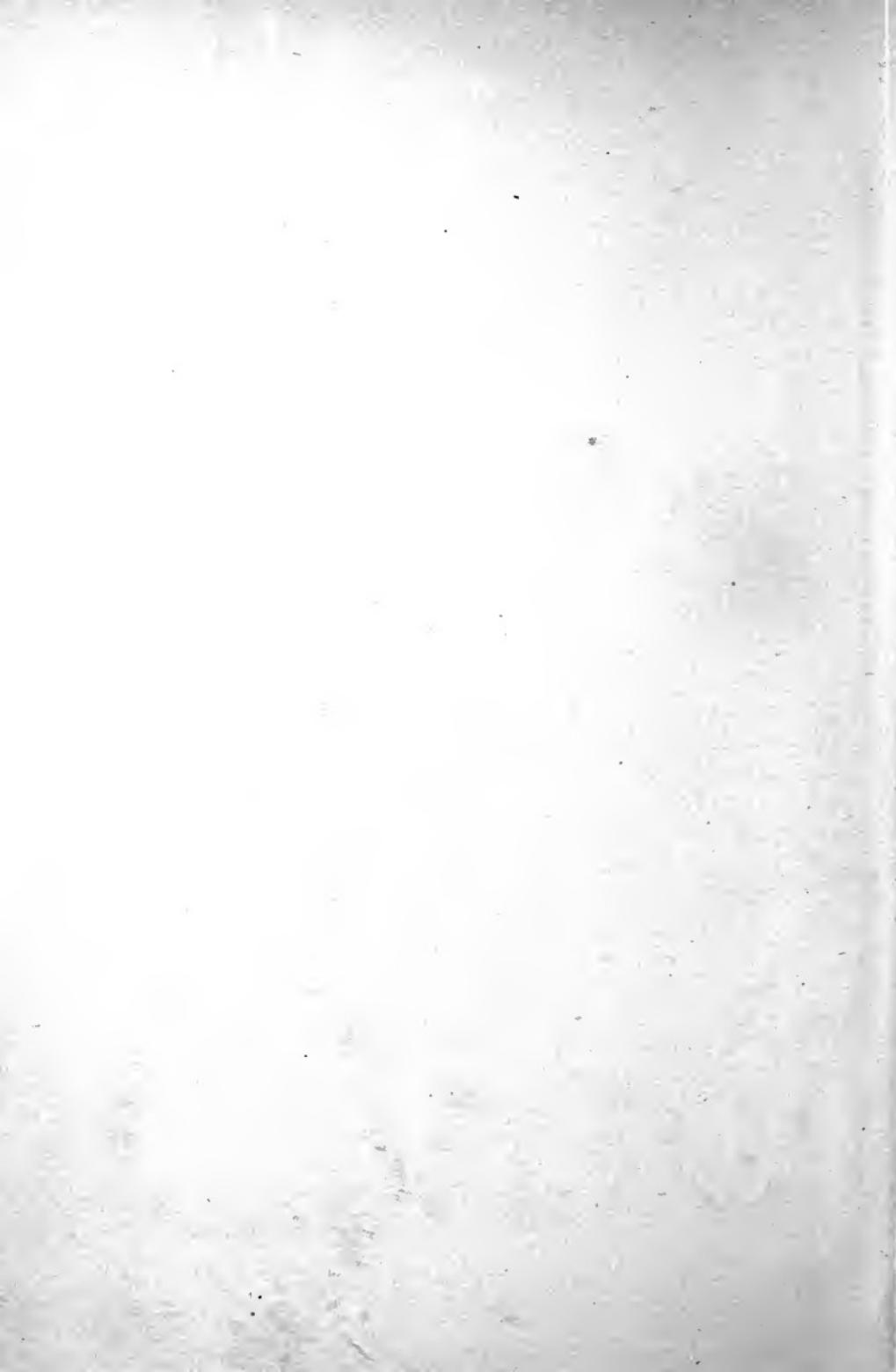
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CONTENTS.





MACBETH,

THANE OF GLAMIS AND CAWDOR.



MACBETH

MACBETH.

When "Duncan the Meek" was king of Scotland there lived a lord, or, as the Scotch call it, a thane whose name was Macbeth. This thane or lord was near kinsman of the king; and this, of course, gave him advantages at court; but beyond that, was he truly esteemed for his real valor and honorable conduct in war.

It was after a battle with a rebel army, assisted by troops from Norway, that Macbeth came highest into the good Duncan's favor. After this battle, while Macbeth and his brave general Banquo were on their way homeward, a wounded soldier, who had fought side by side with Macbeth, was brought before the king.

"What bloody man is that?" cried the king, as the

wounded soldier was brought into his presence. Learning that he was one of Macbeth's men, the king eagerly besought him to tell of the battle.

Gladly the loyal soldier told of his brave master's victory.

Sold. “Doubtfully it stood ;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together,
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald
From the western isles
With kerns and gallowglasses is supplied ;
But all’s too weak ;
For brave Macbeth, (well he deserves that name,)
Disdaining Fortune, with his brandish’d steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valor’s minion,
Carved out his passage, till he faced the slave ;
And ne’er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam’d him
And fix’d his head upon our battlements.”

“O, valiant cousin ! worthy gentleman !” cried Duncan. Go, my noble Rosse, my noble Angus, meet this brave kinsman. And say to him,

“The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success : and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebel’s fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend,
Which should be thine, or his : ”
Say to him,

“ We are sent
To give thee, from our royal master, thanks ;
Only to herald thee into his sight, not pay thee.
And for an earnest of a greater honor,
He bade us, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor :
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane !
For it is thine ! ”



THE THREE WITCHES.

Now, it happened that, while Macbeth and the brave Banquo were crossing the ghostly Scottish heaths, they had been met by three witches. Tall, gaunt, angular

creatures, with withered skins and bearded chins,—they were indeed an uncanny sight.

“ Speak,” said Macbeth; “ speak, if you can, and tell me what you are ! ”

Then, in a hollow, sepulchral voice—a voice belonging to no creature of earth—they spoke.

“ All Hail, Macbeth ! Hail to thee, thane of Glamis,” cried the first witch.

Macbeth started. How did these creatures know that he was Macbeth, Thane of Glamis.

“ All hail, Macbeth ? hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor ! ” hoarsely cried the second witch.

“ The thane of Cawdor ! ” thought Macbeth. “ I cannot be thane of Cawdor. The thane of Cawdor still lives. His title could not come to me while he lives.”

“ All hail, Macbeth ! Macbeth, that shall be king hereafter ! ”

Macbeth stood aghast.

“ Good sir,” said Banquo, “ why do you start and seem to fear words that do sound so fair ? ” Then turning to the witches, he said sternly, “ In the name of truth, what are you ! ”

“ My noble partner
You greet with present grace, and great prediction
Of noble having, and of royal hope.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say, which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear,
Your favors nor your hate.”

"Hail! Hail! Hail!" cried the witches. "You shall be lesser than Macbeth and greater. Not so happy, yet much happier. Though thou shalt not be king, yet thy children shall be kings."

"Hail! Hail! Hail!"



So saying, the witches vanished into thin air, and Macbeth and Banquo stood alone upon the great cold heath, perplexed and amazed enough.

"The earth has bubbles as the water has," laughed Banquo; "these must be some of them."

But Macbeth was touched by what he had heard, and paid little attention to Banquo's words. The witches had stirred in Macbeth's heart all the latent ambition, all the deep-lying willingness to gain his end, whatever the cost. They had not created in Macbeth a wicked heart; they had only drawn out the sorry ambitions and wicked ability already smouldering there.

Banquo, on the other hand,—good, generous, honest Banquo heard the witches' words with calmness, listened in simple wonder, hoping, no doubt, as did Macbeth, that their words might come true. But there were no seeds of sin in his heart to spring up at their words, no longings for wealth and position at whatever cost, and so no harm was done to Banquo by the words of the evil witches.

Macbeth already was lost in a trance of guilty thought; Banquo stood calm and thoughtful, simply wondering.

Just then the messengers from the king arrived. And when the king's kind words were repeated, Banquo exclaims, "What, can these evil witches have told the truth!"

"I, thane of Cawdor?" cried Macbeth. "The thane of Cawdor lives. Why do you call me by that thane's title."

Then the messengers explained to the mystified Macbeth that the thane of Cawdor had been proved a traitor in the recent contest, and that the title was in very truth now to be given to Macbeth. Now, indeed, Macbeth stands rapt. Losing all sense of those about him, he stood gazing into the distance, muttering to himself :

“ This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill ; cannot be good :—if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth ? I am thane of Cawdor ;
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs
Against the use of nature ? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings ;
My thought, whose murther yet is but fantastical
Shakes so my single state of man, that function
Is smothered in surmise : and nothing is
But what is not. * * * *

If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown
me,
Without my stir, * * * Come what may
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.”

“ See,” said Banquo, “ the good Macbeth is so rapt in thought he has forgotton us all.”

“ Forgive me, friends,” answered Macbeth, aroused from his dream. “ Kind gentlemen, I thank you. Now let us hasten to the king.”

As Macbeth went on towards the palace of the king, he sent by private messenger a letter to his wife telling her of the wonderful prophecy of the witches.

Over and over again, Lady Macbeth read the letter :—

“ They met me in the day of success; and I have learned by the perfectest report they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed me, Thane of Cawdor; by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with, Hail, king that shalt be! This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightest not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell.”

The wicked, cruel ambition of Lady Macbeth is aroused. She crushes the letter in her hand and paces up and down the chamber. Her heart beats; her breath comes quick and fast.

*“ Glamis thou art, and Cawdor: and shalt be
What thou art promised:— yet do I fear thy nature,
It is too full o’ the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldest be great;
Art not without ambition; but without
The illness should attend it: what thou wouldest highly
That wouldest thou holily; wouldest not play false,*

And yet wouldst wrongly win ; thou'dst have, great Glamis,
That which cries, *Thus thou must do if thou have it* ;
And that which rather thou dost fear to do,
Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear ;
And chastise with the valor of my tongue
All that impèdes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal.

Just here a messenger arrives. " Well, what tidings ? " asked Lady Macbeth.

" The king comes here to-night. "

" The king ! Very well, let every preparation be made for his reception, " answered she, quietly. Then no sooner is the messenger gone when in rush the evil thoughts, the cruel, murderous plans. " Duncan to come here to-night ! Under our very roof ! O, come then, evil spirits, fill me from the crown to the toe full of direst cruelty ! Make thick my blood ! Stop up the passage of remorse ! Let no thought of tenderness come in to shake my fell purpose. Duncan, the king, must die ! "

Then came Macbeth, full of success, proud in his new honors, and all too ready to hear from his bold, wicked wife her wicked plan for murder.

" My dear, " said he, " Duncan comes here to-night. "

" And when *goes* hence ? " said Lady Macbeth, in an insinuating tone.

"To-morrow — as — as he purposes," answered Macbeth, his face paling as he understood his wife's meaning.

Then Lady Macbeth drew near, and drawing Macbeth's head down, she hoarsely whispered :—



"O, never shall sun that morrow see !
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters :— to beguile the time,
Look like the time ; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue ; look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under it. He that's coming
Must be provided for ; and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch ;

Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom."

Now, the castle of Macbeth was beautifully situated ; the air was fresh and sweet, and among the friezes and buttresses the martlets and the swallows had built their nests. Duncan was pleased with the beautiful place ; and good-hearted king that he was, as Lady Macbeth advanced to meet him, said, "I am afraid, dear honored hostess, the very love and gratitude which brings me to your pleasant home makes trouble for you."

But Lady Macbeth's cruel purpose was not to be shaken by the king's kind words. Neither was she for one second to lose her self-possession. With smiling face and ready tongue she bowed low before him, saying, "All our service in every point twice done, and that done double, would be but poor return for all the honors deep and broad wherewith your Majesty now loads our house."

Poor Duncan ! he little thought the over-abundance of Lady Macbeth's words were but the measure of her hypocrisy and wickedness. His gentle heart believed her as true and honest as himself.

The old king was weary with his long journey, and so, at an early hour, all the castle was quiet and dark and its inmates wrapt in honest sleep ; all except Macbeth and his wicked wife.

"My good wife," said Macbeth, whose courage

began now to fail him, willing though he was to gain the kingship by any means, no matter what, if only he were not himself in danger, "we will go no farther in this business. I have won many honors of late, and those we will enjoy for now. As to this last prophecy of the witch, we will wait."

Then Lady Macbeth rose in all her rage, denouncing him in scathing sarcasm.

"Was the hope drunk,
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time,
Such I account thy love. Art thou afraid
To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Would'st thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the cat i' the adage?"

"Peace, woman, peace!" cried Macbeth, stung by her words. "I dare do all that becomes a man. Who dares do more is none."

"A man! when you broke this enterprise to me and dared do that which shall make you king—*then* you were a man. Neither time nor place did help you then. Now here is Duncan beneath your very roof—time and place have come to you. And now you *dare* not do the deed. O shame upon you! cow-

ard that you are ! No woman loves her little ones more than I ; but I would snatch them from my arms and dash their brains against the ground had I so sworn, as you have done to do this."

"But if we should fail ?"

"Fail ! but screw your courage to the sticking place and we'll not fail."

Macbeth, inspired by her daring, and stung by her words, answered her.

"It shall be done. This very night I'll go to Duncan's bed, take from his guards their daggers, and kill the king. Then will the people say it was the guards themselves that did it."

Meeting in the castle yard a little later, Banquo said to Macbeth, "I dreamed of the witches last night. To you they seemed to have told some truth."

"O, the witches ! I have not thought of them. Still, sometime when there is leisure, we'll talk together of their words. I doubt not their words will bring you honor as they have me."

"I shall be glad," answered Banquo simply, "if only I lose none in seeking to get more. We must keep our souls clear whatever comes. And now, good sleep to you."

"Thanks ; the like to you. "And now," said Macbeth, turning to his servant, "Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready, that she strike upon the bell. Then get thee to bed. I shall not need you."

When, at last, Macbeth was alone, all the horror and dread of his deed came over him. It seemed to him the dagger he was to use stood forth in the air before him. Its very handle seemed towards him, inviting him to murder.



“ Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee :
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshal’st me the way that I was going ;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o’ the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood;
Which was not so before. — There’s no such thing :

It is the bloody business, which informs
Thus to mine eyes. — Now o'er the one-half world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep ; — witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings ; and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
Moves like a ghost. — Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. — While I threat, he lives :
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breadth gives.

[A bell rings.]

I go, and it is done ; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan ; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven, — or to hell.

Macb. I have done the deed : — Did'st thou not hear a
noise ?

Lady M. I heard the owl scream, and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak ?

Macb. When ?

Lady M. Now.

Macb. As I descended ?

Lady M. Ay.

Macb. Hark ! —

Who lies i' the second chamber ?

Lady M.

Donalbain.

Macb. This is a sorry sight.

[*Looking at his hands.*

Lady M. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

Macb. There's one did laugh in his sleep, and one cried
“murder!”

That they did wake each other; I stood and heard them:
But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
Again to sleep.

Lady M. There are two lodg'd together.

Macb. One cried, “God bless us!” and “Amen,” the
other;

As they had seen me, with these hangman's hands,
Listening their fear. I could not say, “Amen,”
When they did say, “God bless us.”

Lady M. Consider it not so deeply.

Macb. But wherefore could not I pronounce “Amen?”
I had most need of blessing, and “Amen”

Stuck in my throat.

Lady M. These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

Macb. Methought I heard a voice cry, “Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep,”—the innocent sleep;
Sleep, that knits up the ravell'd sleave of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast—

Lady M. What do you mean?

Macb. Still it cried, *Sleep no more!* to all the house:
Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more!

Lady M. Who was it that thus cried ! Why, worthy thane,
 You do unbend your noble strength, to think
 So brainsickly of things : Go get some water,
 And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
 Why did you bring these daggers from the place ?
 They must lie there : go carry them ; and smear
 The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macb. I'll go no more.
 I am afraid to think what I have done ;
 Look on't again I dare not.

Lady M. Infirm of purpose !
 Give me the daggers : The sleeping and the dead
 Are but as pictures : 'tis the eye of childhood,
 That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
 I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal,
 For it must seem their guilt.

[Exit—Knocking within.]

Macb. Whence is that knocking ?
 How is't with me, when every noise appals me ?
 What hands are here ? Ha ! they pluck out mine eyes !
 Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
 Clean from my hand ? No ; this my hand will rather
 The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
 Making the green one—red.

Re-enter *Lady Macbeth.*

Lady M. My hands are of your color ; but I shame
 To wear a heart so white. [Knock.] I hear a knocking
 At the south entry :—retire we to our chamber :
 A little water clears us of this deed :
 How easy it is, then ! Your constancy

Hath left you unattended—[*Knocking.*] Hark ! more knocking :

Get on your night gown, rest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

Macb. To know my deed, 't were best not know myself.

[*Knock.* Wake Duncan with thy knocking ! Ay, 'would thou could'st !

Morning came, and with it the discovery of the murder. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth made great show of horror, and surprise, and grief. Still, suspicion fell wholly upon them. Foolish had they been to suppose that for all they had taken the daggers from the guards, and had smeared their faces with blood, that these would be proofs of the guilt of these poor servants.

"The servants loved their master too well to kill him," said the people. Besides, what gain could it have been to them to have him dead? No ! they were not the murderers. The murderers were those who would be gainers by his death."

Duncan's two sons, feeling that Macbeth must have murdered their father with the hope of gaining the throne, and knowing full well that they too must be murdered before the throne could by right be Macbeth's, wisely fled the country. One put himself under the protection of the English court, and the other fled to Ireland.

Macbeth was now, indeed, king. The predictions of the weird sisters had all come true. But were this king and queen at peace in their new position? Did they even feel secure?

No; now that part of the propheey in which Banquo had been told: "Tho' not yourself a king, yet shall thy children be kings,"—this disturbed the peace of the new king and queen.

"It is of very little value," thought they, "to have stained our hands with blood and to have defiled our souls with crime, only to place the kingdom in Banquo's hands. We have but scotched the snake, not killed it. Banquo, too, must die—Banquo and his little son."

And so a great supper was announced, and all the thanes in the country about were invited, Banquo and his son Fleance with especial respect. But along the roadside by which Banquo was to come, Macbeth had stationed murderers, who were instructed to rush upon Banquo and Fleance and stab them. "See that you do your duty well," said Maebeth, as he entered the banquet hall.

"Now good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both," said Macbeth with forced gayety. "If only Banquo were here, all the country's honor would be beneath our roof to-night. Where can the noble Banquo be?"

But only too well he knew that an hour before Banquo had been struck down by his own orders, and

that already in a ditch he lay, with twenty trenched gashes on his head.

"If only Banquo were here," said Macbeth again, moving towards his royal chair.



A start! a cry! and a look of horror spread over the wicked king's face. Trembling with fear, his voice almost strangled in his throat, he clutched at Lady Macbeth, saying :

"Oh, 'tis Banquo's ghost! he sits upon my chair!"

Brave man as Macbeth was, shrinking not to face the enemy in hottest battle, he now shrank trembling, his cheeks blanched, his eyes fixed, before this awful reminder of his crime.

"Shake not your gory locks at me, O ghost. You cannot say I did it!" cried he trembling with fear.

"Gentlemen, let us rise," said Rosse, "His Royal Highness must be ill."

"No, no! pray seat yourselves," cried Lady Macbeth, who knew all too well that Banquo's ghost might well appear, for, as was then believed, ghosts could appear.

My lord is often thus,

And hath been from his youth: pray you keep seat;
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well; if much you note him,
You shall offend him, and extend his passion;
Feed, and regard him not.

Then turning to Macbeth, she said in the scornful tone that had spurred her lord on to his great crime: "Shame on you! Can you not be a man?"

Macb. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.

Lady M. O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws, and starts,
(Imposters to true fear) would well become
A woman's story, at a winter's fire,

Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself !
 Why do you make such faces ! When all's done,
 You look but on a stool.

Macb. Pry'thee, see there ! behold ! look ! lo ! — how
 say you ?

Why, what care I ? If thou cans't nod, speak, too.
 If charnel-houses and our graves must send
 Those that we bury back, our monuments
 Shall be the maws of kites. [Ghost disappears.]

Lady M. What ! quite unmann'd in folly ?

Macb. If I stand here, I saw him.

Lady M. Fie, for shame !

Macb. Blood hath been shed ère now, i' the olden time.
 Ere human statute purg'd the gentle weal ;
 Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
 Too terrible for the ear ; the times have been,
 That when the brains were out the man would die,
 And there an end ; but now they rise again,
 With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
 And push us from our stools. This is more strange
 Than such a murder is.

† *Lady M.* My worthy lord,
 Your noble friends do lack you.

Macb. I do forge,:—
 Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends :
 I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
 To those that know me. Come, love and health to all :
 Then I'll sit down :— Give me some wine fill full :
 I drink to the general joy of the whole table.
 And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss ;

Would he were here ! to all and him we thirst,
And all to all.

Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

Macb. [Ghost re-enters.] Avaunt ! and quit my sight !
Let the earth hide thee !

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold.
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with !

Lady M. Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom : 'tis no other ;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

Macb. What man dares I dare :
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger,
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble.

Hence, horrible shadow ! Unreal mockery, hence !

[*Ghost vanishes.*

Why, so ;— being gone,
I am a man again—Pray you, sit still.

Lady M. You have displac'd the mirth, broke the good
meeting,
With most admir'd disorder.

Macb. Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder ? You make me strange,
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine are blanch'd with fear.

Rosse.

What sights, my lord ?

Lady M. I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
 Question enrages him: at once, good-night: —
 Stand not upon the order of your going,
 But go at once.

Lennox. Good-night, and better health
 Attend his majesty!

Lady M. A kind good-night to all!

MACBETH VISITS THE WITCHES.

O wretched king! O wretched queen!
 "I will go to the wierd sisters, and they shall tell
 what the future is to bring to us. I will know if
 Fleance is to be king," said Macbeth on the following
 day.

To a great cave where the witches dwelt he went.
 There he found them dancing and crooning around
 their horrible caldron.

Thrice the brindle cat hath mew'd.
 Thrice and once the hedge-pig whin'd
 Harpier cries: — 'Tis time, 'tis time.
 Round about the caldron go;
 In the poison'd entrails throw.
 Toad, that under coldest stone,
 Days and nights has thirty-one,
 Sweltered venom sleeping got,
 Boil thou first i' the charmed pot!

Double, double toil and trouble ;
Fire, burn ; and caldron, bubble.
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake :
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble.
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
Double, double toil and trouble ;
Fire, burn ; and cauldron, bubble.
Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Root of hemlock, digg'd i' dark ;
Gall of goat, and slips of yew,
Silver'd in the moon's eclipse ;
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips ;
Double, double toil and trouble ;
Fire burn and caldron, bubble.
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

"How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags.
What are you doing now?" called Macbeth from the cavern door.

"A deed without a name," croaked the witches.

"Tell me now what I would know. My future I will hear, be it fair, or be it black as night."

Now arose a spirit from the burning, blazing caldron, saying : "Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth ! beware the thane of Fife."

Then rose a second spirit. "Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth ! Fear not ; thou shalt never vanquished be until great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hills shall come against thee."



"O, ho ! laughed Macbeth," as that can never be I'm safe indeed. But tell me one thing more. Shall Banquo's children sit upon my throne ?"

Down went the caldron with a great noise ; and be-

fore him appeared a long procession of ghostly spirits led by Banquo's bloody ghost.

"Oh horrible sight ! Oh, now I see it's true ; for the blood stained Banquo smiled upon me as he passed, and pointed at the shades as his. Oh, let this pernicious hour be forever accursed. And calling up the witches again, he vowed vengeance upon the thane of Fife, the child of Banquo, and all who should again dare cross him.

Wretched Macbeth ! honor and happiness he had sacrificed to his ambition. He had killed the king and filled his nights with horrors,—all—that Banquo's son might be king of Scotland. Already Macduff, the thane of Fife, against whom the spirit had warned him, had fled to England to join an army under one of Duncan's sons, to march against Macbeth.

Wild with rage and fear, when he heard this he set upon the castle of Macduff, killed his wife and children, and threatened with death all who should claim relationship with Macduff.

This unwarranted act of cruelty aroused the nobility against Macbeth, and many more fled to England to join the army which was now, indeed, becoming powerful. Everybody was coming to hate the tyrant. Nobody loved or honored him, and worst of all he could not honor himself. Hearing that the army was approaching, that it had already come to Dunsinane, and had there fortified itself, he said wearily :

I have liv'd long enough ; my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf :
And that which should accompany old age,
As, honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have ; but, in their stead,
Curses not loud, but deep, mouth-honor, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, but dare not.

Lady Macbeth herself, worn out with terrible dreams by night, and never absent memories of crime by day, has come already to be a broken-down, half-crazed, wretched, defeated woman. Death came to her at last—some say by her own hand,—and so she was spared the downfall of the kingdom so close at hand.

What could better show the utter despair of Macbeth, his weariness of his own sin, than these words of his, when news of his wife's death were brought him ?

Macb. I have almost forgot the taste of fears ;
The time has been my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek ; and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse, and stir
As life were in't. I have supp'd full with horrors ;
Direness, familiar to my slaught'rous thoughts,
Cannot once start me — Wherefore was that cry ?

Sey. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macb. She should have died hereafter ;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,

To the last syllable of recorded time ;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle !
Life's but a walking shadow ; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more : it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Now he grew careless of life, and longed for his own death, perhaps more than did his enemies. But Malcolm's army was coming on. This aroused his hate and whatever there may have remained of his old courage. "I cannot be defeated," he would say to himself, "little as I care, until Birnam wood shall come to Dunsinane, and surely that can never be."

But one day a messenger rushed into his presence breathless and shaking with fear.

"Well, boy, what is it ?"

"My gracious lord, I hardly know how to report that which I saw. For as I stood upon the hill, and looked towards Birnam, it seemed to me the wood began to move."

"Liar and slave !" cried Macbeth. "If you have spoken false you shall hang alive to-morrow !" Out upon the hill rushed Macbeth. True enough ! there was the wood approaching — at least, so it seemed ; for the wise general on reaching Birnam forest had ordered that every soldier cut for himself a large branch,

and, bearing it before him, so conceal the number of the army from Macbeth's sentries.



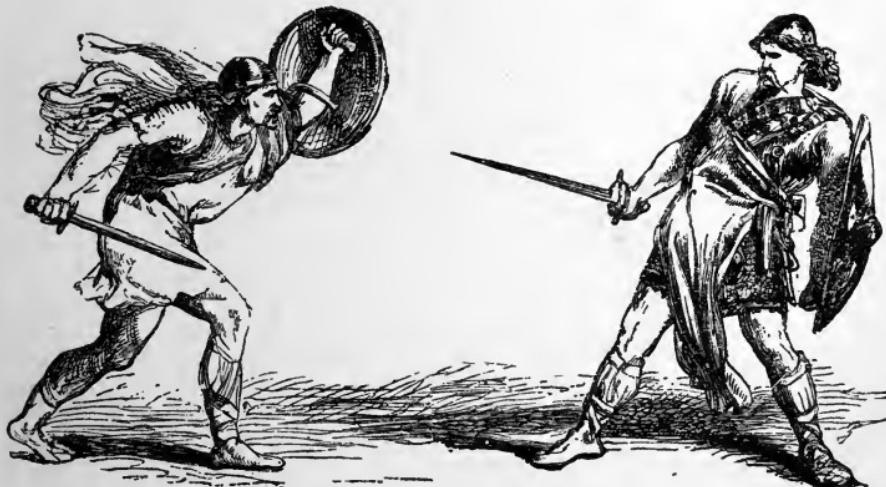
There is little more to tell. From the beginning of the terrible battle, Macbeth knew he must perish. Still, urged on by fierce hate, he rushed with rage and fury into the thickest of the fight.

McDUFF AND MACBETH MEET.

“Of all men else, I have avoided thee.
But get thee back! My soul is too much
Charged with blood of thine already; I will
Not fight with thee,” cried Macbeth.

"Then live," thundered Macduff, "and we will make a show of thee. We will put a painted board upon thee, on which we'll say, 'Behold the Tyrant.'"

"I will *not* live ! Before my body I throw my war-like shield. Lay on Macduff ! and cursed be he that first cries, 'Hold ! enough !'"



And so they fought. Macbeth was killed, and a great shout rose from the battle field."

"Hail, Malcolm ! Hail, King of Scotland."



OPHELIA.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.



HAMLET'S REVENGE.

It was a strange, strange thing, so all the country said, that Gertrude, the beautiful queen of Denmark, should, only two months after the good King Hamlet's death, marry his brother Claudius.

"Evil spirits must have whisperd to her—elves must have influenced her," said the superstitious peasant people to each other. "Else how could she, so

lately the idolized queen of our noble-hearted, gentle-mannered king, have married this Claudius, whose contemptible appearance was exceeded only by his base, ignoble disposition."

"Some wrong is there," whispered the courtiers among themselves. "I dreamed of murder," said one. "And I of witchcraft," said another; "and much do I fear this present villainous king did *kill* our noble master that he might himself gain the throne, and push aside its rightful occupant, our dear young Hamlet. And see, here he comes now! Poor Prince! how sad he looks! Since his father's death, he has been thus clouded with the deepest melancholy. Student as he was, he seems to care no longer for his books; his games are thrown aside, and he wanders up and down the country like one "a-weary of the world."

One night, when two officers were keeping guard, there appeared before them a ghost—the ghost of the dead king, Hamlet. Again they saw it on the following night at the same time, in the same place.

Now, when the ghost of the dead returned to earth, it was believed that some wrong had been done which must be righted ere the dead could rest in peace. And so when this ghost appeared, so like in bearing and in figure to the kingly king, the guards, who had often talked together and had gravely shook their heads over what seemed to all so unnatural a proceed-

ing in the Queen, now looked at one another saying, "It is as we feared. Some wrong has been done our king, and he comes to bid us listen and perhaps avenge his wrong. Of this appearance, young Hamlet must be told."

Fearing the young Prince might not credit their report, the guards went first to his friend Horatio; told him what for two nights they had seen, and begged him to accompany them on the watch and see for himself.

Horatio came, saying, perhaps in doubt, perhaps to cover his own dread, "Tush! tush! 'tis but your fancy. The ghost will not appear. However, let us sit down, and you Bernado, tell us of this strange thing you say you've seen."

Bernado eagerly began. A sentence hardly had he said, when lo! the ghost appeared.

"Peace, peace," cried Marcellus, springing to his feet. "See it comes again!"

"And in the very form of him that's dead i" whispered Bernado.

"Speak to it, Horatio! Is it not the king? Looks it not like him?"

Hor.

"Stay, illusion!

If thou hast any sound or use of voice,
Speak to me!

If there be any good things to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,

Speak to me !

If thou knowest some secret of thy country's fate,
Some secret of foretelling may avoid,
O, speak ! ”

“ And now 'tis gone ! We wrong it with such show of force ! And now, good friends, let us impart to young Hamlet what we have seen to-night. This spirit which will not speak with us, will speak to him.”

Then the three separated, silent and awe-struck at what they had seen.

With slow step, and downcast eyes, Horatio went to the castle in search of Hamlet.

He found him in the large hall where the king, in the midst of a group of friends, stood making a very mixed up, extravagant speech, in which he begged them to make merry over the recent marriage and still to forget not to reverence the dead. A rather difficult thing to do, considering that the marriage so quickly following the good king's death was itself an outrage on all decency.

Hamlet looked on, his face sad indeed, and his soul filled with disappointment that the mother whom he had believed so noble should have so disgraced herself in this.

The queen, never now at ease in the presence of her noble son, turned to him, saying, “ Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted color off, and let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark. Do not forever, with thy veiled

lids seek for thy noble father in the dust. Thou knowest that death is common. All that live must die, passing through nature to eternity."

"Indeed, it *is* common," answered Hamlet. But 'tis not my inky cloak, nor yet my solemn visage that denote me truly. I have that within which passeth show ; these are but the trappings and the suit of woe."

Then the king spoke,—the king who in his fear and guilty dread of this youth, tried always to avert his honest wrath by soft speech and courteous deeds—wishing deep in his heart that the son, so hateful in his sight, were with his father in the land of shades.

"'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet, to give these mourning duties to your father. But you must know your father lost a father, that father, too, lost his, and was bound in filial obligation for a time to sorrow for him ; but to persevere

In obstinate condolement, is a course
Of impious stubbornness ; 'tis unmanly grief ;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven ;
A heart unfortified, or mind impatient.

Fie ! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd ; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse, till he that died today ;
This must be so. We pray you, throw to earth

This unprevailing woe ; and think of us
As of a father ; for let the world take note,
You are the next immediate to our throne ;
And, with no less nobility of love,
Than that which dearest father bears his son
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wirtenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire :
And, we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.”

Well the king knew young Hamlet was by all this
sweetness not one whit deceived. Clearly enough he
saw the fire flash from the youth's eye, and the look of
contempt overspread his face, as he looked into the
very soul of the black-hearted king. And so, making
some weak excuse, he withdrew with his friends from
the hall, leaving Hamlet to himself. No sooner was
he alone than his breaking heart broke forth.

“ O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew !
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! O God !
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world !
Fie on't ! O fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed ; things rank, and gross in nature,
Possess it merely. That it should come to this !

It is not, nor it cannot come to good ;
But break, my heart ; for I must hold my tongue ! ”

Just here, Horatio, Hamlet's school friend, is ushered in.

“ Horatio ! I am glad to see you well. What brings you here from Wirtenburg ! ” exclaimed Hamlet, glad indeed to see one loyal friend again.

“ I came, my lord, to see your father's funeral.”

“ Pray do not mock me, dear fellow student. I think you came to see my mother's wedding,” said Hamlet bitterly.

“ Indeed, it did follow hard upon it.”

“ 'Twas thrift, Horatio, thrift. Don't you see that the funeral-baked meats did, cold, furnish the marriage tables. O yes, 'twas thrift, thrift.” Then dropping this sarcastic humor, and taking Horatio's hand, he said with tears,

“ Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio !
My father, — methinks, I see my father.

Hor. Where,
My lord ?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw ! who ?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father ?

Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear ; 'till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waste and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed at point, exactly, cap-à-piè,
Appears before them, and, with solemn march,
Goes slow and stately by them ; thrice he walked
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
And I, with them, the third night kept the watch :
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good
The apparition comes : I knew your father ;
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this ?

Hor. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it ?

Hor. My lord, I did :
But answer made it none ; yet once, methought,

It lifted up its head, and did address
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak :
 But, even then, the morning cock crew loud ;
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
 And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honor'd lord, 'tis true ;
 And we did think it our duty,
 To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me,
 Hold you the watch to-night?

All. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you ?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe ?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not
 His face ?

Hor. O, yes, my lord ; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly ?

Hor. A countenance more
 In sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red ?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you ?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like,
 Very like : stay'd it long ?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Ham. His beard was grizzl'd? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch tonight;
Perchance, 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant, it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it.

Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honor.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you; Farewell!
My father's spirit in arms! all is not well.

I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come?
Till then sit still, my soul. [Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.]

With impatience, almost frenzy, Hamlet awaited the coming of the night. Long before midnight, he was pacing restlessly back and forth with Horatio and the guards. "Is it not midnight yet?" he asked from time to time.

"What noise is that?" asked Horatio as the blast of trumpets from the castle reached their ears.

"'Tis my noble father's brother drinking his marriage pledge," answered Hamlet with a sneer.

"Look, look, my lord! it comes!"

"What comes! where!"

"The ghost! there!"

For a moment Hamlet staggered back. His brain reeled ; the air grew black. His very heart stood still. Then with a voice thick and husky, his friends supporting his trembling weight, he spoke :

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us ! —
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd ;
Bring with thee airs from Heaven or blasts from Hell ;
Be thy intents wicked or charitable ;
Thou comest in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee : I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, Father : Royal Dane, O, answer me !
Let me not burst in ignorance ; but tell
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements ; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd,
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
Revisitest thus the glimpses of the Moon,
Making night hideous ; and we fools of Nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?
Say, why is this ? wherefore ? what should we do ?

[*Ghost beckons HAMLET.*

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartiment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground :

But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?

I do not set my life at a pin's fee;

And, for my soul, what can it do to that,

Being a thing immortal as itself?

It waves me forth again;— I'll follow it.

Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord.
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff.

Ham. It waves me still:—

Go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.

[*Ghost beckons.*

Still am I call'd; unhand me, gentlemen.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit :

Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night ;
And for the day, confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul ; freeze thy young blood ;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres ;
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine :
List, list, O list !

If thou didst ever thy dear father love —

Ham. O heaven !

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Ham. Murder ?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know it ; that I,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt ;
Now, Hamlet, hear :

"Tis given out, that sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me ; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd : but know, thou, noble youth,

The serpent that did sting thy father's life,
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetic soul ! my uncle !



Ghost. Now fare thee well at once !
The glow worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire :

Adieu, adieu, adieu ! remember me ! [Exit.]

Ham. O all you host of heaven ! O earth ! What else ?
Hold, hold, my heart ;
Remember thee ?

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee ?

Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All sows of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain.
O villain, villain, smiling villain !
O, one may smile, and smile, and be a villian ;
At least, it may be so in Denmark :

And now Horatio, fearing some terrible fate must
have seized upon Hamlet, follows him.

"What is it, my noble lord ? What have you heard ?"

"O, wonderful ! wonderful !" was all the youth
could say.

"I cannot tell you what I've heard nor what I've
seen. Wilt grant me one request ?"

"In truth we will. What is it ?"

"Only this : — never make known what we have seen
this night. Swear it, good friends, upon this sword."

"We will, my" —

"Swear !" rang out a voice from the very earth be-
neath their feet.

"Good heavens!" whispered they, cold with fright.
"What sound was that? This is wondrous strange."

"And therefore as a stranger let us give it welcome. There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

"Now let us kiss the hilt of Hamlet's sword — our pledge of loyalty to my unhappy father."

Again the sad, distant voice beneath their feet.

"Rest, rest perturbed spirit. And now, gentlemen," said Hamlet, wearily, "there is work for me to do; and however odd I may hereafter bear myself, remember our pledge; and help me with your silence."

"And now with all my love I do commend me to you; and what so poor a man as Hamlet is may do to express his love and friendship to you, God knows, it shall not lack. Now let us go and pray. The time is out of joint. O, cursed spite that ever I was born to set it right."

The terror of this night's work told upon Hamlet. His mind so dispirited before, now almost lost its reason. "Avenge my murder! Avenge my murder!" rang continually in his ears.

It was about this time that Hamlet began to suspect the new king of holding towards himself suspicion that in some way he knew the manner of his father's death. Too well he knew that if such a fear once entered the villain's head, no means would be left unused to get Hamlet within his power. To avert this suspicion,

Hamlet conceived the idea of feigning madness — a mild, simple madness, which should make him appear to have lost the memory of the past, and to have entered into a condition of half-childishness. So perfectly did he counterfeit this, that the king and queen were quite deceived ; even his friend, Horatio, almost feared sometimes that the madness was not feigned.

Now, before Hamlet fell into this melancholy way, he had dearly loved a beautiful maiden — Ophelia — the daughter of Polonius, the king's chief councellor. Not daring to take her into his confidence in the terrible work he must do, there seemed no other way but to now turn against her. But when he saw the pain he gave this gentle maiden whom he so loved and who now so loyally shielded him from every unfair word from those who hated him, his heart indeed grew heavy, and he longed to tell her in the midst of his madness and show of indifference that his love for her had not changed. He wrote her a letter — extravagant and wild — but full of love ; hoping that some way she might get from it some sense of the heart that, in all his madness, was so true to her.

This letter Ophelia showed to her father ; and from that time it was believed that it was love for her that had dethroned his reason ; for Polonius, angry at Hamlet's indifference, as he deemed it, towards his daughter had commanded her to return his gifts and

his letters, and to hold herself as angry with him should he attempt to speak with her.

This Ophelia did, and now when Hamlet began to show such signs of madness, to say such wild things, sometimes rude, sometimes gentle, old Polonius reproached himself that he had thus mistaken the young prince ; and more still, being ambitious for his daughter, that he had perhaps destroyed for her all hope of wedding with a royal prince.

“ ‘Tis this hath made him mad,” sighed he. “ Alas, I fear I did mistake this youth.”

“ Well, anything,” said Hamlet, “ rather than that these people should catch the truth. But poor Ophelia, poor Ophelia ! ”

Now Hamlet had little love for the meddlesome old Polonius, and, being “mad,” he often amused himself at Polonius’ expense. One morning Polonius came up to him and said in a fawning manner — for Polonius was a great worshipper of royalty —

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent, well ; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir ; to be honest as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

Pol. That’s very true, my lord. What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words !

Pol. What is the matter, my lord ?

Ham. Between whom ?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there's method in it.

Will you walk out of the air, my lord ?

Ham. Into my grave ?

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air.—How to the point sometimes his replies are ! A happiness that often madness hits on. I will leave him, and in some way contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My honorable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal ; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools !

So the days passed. In imagination, Hamlet saw forever with him his father's ghost urging him to avenge his cruel death. Every hour of delay seemed to him a sin, and yet the murder even of this wicked usurper of his father's throne seemed to the gentle Hamlet an odious, a horrible thing. Now and then, too, would come a doubt whether it was his father's ghost he had seen—whether it was not rather some wicked spirit luring him to his own destruction. "If I could have some proof that this king *did* kill my father," he would say to himself.

While he was in this irresolute mind, there came to the castle a strolling band of actors, in whom Hamlet had often taken great delight. There was one tragic speech especially which Hamlet never tired of; and now when the players came again he asked their leader to repeat it to him.

The player did so; and in such a lively manner, setting forth the murder of the King of Priam, the destruction of the people and the city by fire, the mad grief of the poor old queen, that not only were the people of the court moved to tears, but the speaker himself at the end could speak only in a broken voice, convulsed with sobs.

This sight set Hamlet to thinking. If this player could work himself up to such a passion by a mere fictitious speech, to weep for one he had never seen, how dull was he that, with a dear father murdered, could let the days go by and that father not revenged.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I?
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That from her working, all his visage wann'd;
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

I'll have these players

Play something like the murder of my father,
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick; if he do blemish
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen,
May be a devil: I'll have grounds
More relative than this. The play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

"Good friends," said he, returning to the players, "prepare a play like this: a king sleeps in the garden. His brother comes and pours into his ear a deadly poison. Then gaining the love of that murdered king's good queen, doth marry her and take the throne. Now, mark you, act it well, and I in turn will pay you well. Speak the speech, I pray you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. And do not saw the air too much with your hand: but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance,

that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings ; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but dumb shows and noise : I would have such a fellow whipped for over-doing Termagant ; it out-herods Herod. Pray you avoid all that. Now go, and learn your part."

Hamlet, left alone, leaned wearily against the window casement saying,

" To be, or not to be, that is the question :—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The sling and arrows of outrageous fortune ;
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them ? — To die,— to sleep,—
No more ;— and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,— 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die ;— to sleep ;—
To sleep ! perchance to dream ;— ay, there's the rub ;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must make us pause : there's the respect,
That makes calamity of so long life :
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make

With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life;
But that the dread of something after death,—
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns,— puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.— Soft you, now! Here comes
The fair Ophelia:— Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd."

Now it happened that Polonius and the king had planned to send Ophelia into the presence of Hamlet, and they themselves were to hide behind the heavy draperies of the window to listen to what should be said.

"There! Hamlet is alone, Ophelia. Go to him and give him the presents that he gave you," said Polonius.

Reluctantly Ophelia approached the true-hearted Hamlet.

Oph. Good my lord,

How does your honor for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well.

Oph.— My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have long longed to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham.

No, not I;

I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honored lord, you know right well, you did ;
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd,



As made the things more rich ; their perfume lost,
Take these again ; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.]
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha !

Oph. My lord ?

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery.

Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him: that he may play the fool nowhere but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!

The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,

The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,

The observ'd of all observers! quite, quite down!

Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,

Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;

O, woe is me!

To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

All this time Polonius and the king had been listening.

"Polonius," said the king coming out from their hiding place, "you are a fool. Hamlet is mad — of that there is no doubt. But he's not in love with your daughter. There's some secret hidden in his heart — something that makes me think it will be very wise to send him away — out of the country — to England."

And so saying, the king betook himself to his chamber to invent some plot by which Hamlet, of whom he was now indeed suspicious, might be removed from court. Polonius ambled off by himself, wondering why his schemes succeeded so poorly; and Hamlet busied



himself with preparing the players for the scene which was to "catch the conscience of the king."

And now the play was ready. The king and queen and all the attendants were brought into the great hall. Little did the king suspect what was before him.

"What do you call this play?" asked the king.



"The Mouse-trap," said Hamlet with a cynical smile.

The play began with a conversation between the king and his queen, in which she made extravagant protestations of love, and calling upon heaven to witness that if he should die she would mourn him to the day of her own death.

The king in return declared that if she ever broke her vow she should forever be accursed.

"No woman," said he, "save those who kill their first husbands would ever think of such a thing."

Sharply Hamlet watched his mother and her guilty husband. He saw them color, grow uneasy, frightened. Now came the murder scene. The king could hear no more.

"Stop, stop the play! Bring lights, lights, lights! I am ill. Take me to my chamber," cried he.

"Ah yes! Ah yes!" nodded Hamlet as the company ran hither and thither. Then, turning to Horatio, he said, "O good Horatio, I'll take the Ghost's word for a thousand pounds. Didst thou perceive?"

"Indeed, I did, my lord."

"Ah, well, let's go."

Just now a servant enters. "Your mother, sir, desires to speak with you. She says your behavior has struck her with wonder and amazement."

"Indeed! wonderful son that can so amaze his mother. Tell her I will come at once," answered Hamlet.

"My lord," said Polonius, ambling in just then, "Your mother wishes to speak with you at once."

"Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?" asked Hamlet of Polonius.

"By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed."

"Methinks it is like a weasel."

"It is backed like a weasel," said Polonius, anxious to agree with Hamlet.

"Or, like a whale?"

"Very like a whale."

"Then will I come to my mother by and by."

"Now go, my friends;
Leave me, I am weary. Now I'm alone again.

'Tis now the very witching-time of night,
When church-yards yawn, and Hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world; now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business, as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;
Let me be cruel, not unnatural.
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites."

Slowly and in deep thought, Hamlet, weighed down with what he had learned and with the dread horror of what he knew must follow, dragged himself to his mother's chamber.

Ham. Now, mother; what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, not so:

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And,—'would it were not so!—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down;

You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!

"Help, ho, ho!" came a voice from behind the curtain.

"How now! what's behind the curtain? A rat?"
"Take this, and this," cried Hamlet, striking through the drapery.

"O, I am slain! I am slain!" moaned the voice.

"Who is it? Is it the king?" asked Hamlet, trembling with the thought that perhaps thus unwittingly he had avenged his father's death. Then lifting the drapery, he dragged forth the dead body of Polonius. The meddlesome, prying old man had hid behind the curtain that he might overhear what should be said.

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed;—almost as bad, good mother.
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

[To POLONIUS.]

I took thee for thy better ; take thy fortune :
 Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger —

[*To the Queen.*

Leave wringing of your hands : Peace, sit you down
 And let me wring your heart : for so I shall,
 If it be made of penetrable stuff ;
 If custom have not braz'd it so,
 That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st speak so rude
 against me ?

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this ?
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
 See what a grace was seated on this brow ;
 Hyperion's curls ; the front of Jove himself ;
 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command ;
 A station like the herald, Mercury,
 New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill ;
 A combination, and a form, indeed,
 Where every god did seem to set his seal,
 To give the world assurance of a man :
 This *was* your husband. Look you now, what follows :
 Here *is* your husband : like a mildew'd ear,
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ?

Queen. O, speak to me no more ;
 These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears ;
 No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer, and a villain :
 A slave !
 A cutpurse of the empire and the rule ;
 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,

And put it in his pocket !

Queen.

No more.

[Enter Ghost.

Ham.

A king !



Ghost. Do not forget ; This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But look ! amazement on thy mother sits.
O, step between her and her fighting soul ;
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is't with you, lady ?

Queen. Alas, how is it with you
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eye your spirits wildly peep ;
And as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your hair,
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him ! on him !—Look you, how pale he glares !

Queen. To whom do you speak this ?

Ham. Do you see nothing there ?

Queen. Nothing at all ! yet all, that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear ?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there ! look, how it steals away !
My father, in his habit as he liv'd !

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal !

[*Exit Ghost.*

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain :

Ham. It is not madness
That I have utter'd ; bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word ; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness, speaks :
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place ;
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven ;
Repent what's past ; avoid what is to come ;

And do not spread the compost on the weeds
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue.

Queen. O Hamlet ! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.

Good-night !

And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you.
So again, good-night !

I must be cruel, only to be kind.
But one word more, good lady.
I must to England ; you know that.

Queen. Alack,

I had forgot ; 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. Good-night, mother.

The murder of Polonius gave the king a pretence for sending Hamlet out of the country. Glad indeed was he of any pretence to rid himself of his presence. To have killed him would have pleased him best ; but the people so loved the gentle Hamlet, and the queen, weak as she was, so idolized him, that he hardly dared do that. Accordingly he planned to send Hamlet to England, and with those in whose keeping he was to be placed he had made arrangements that, by and by, he should be killed and word sent to Denmark that the young prince had fallen ill and died.

This plan, however, did not succeed, and most un-

expectedly and most unwelcomely to the king did Hamlet return to Denmark.

Now, while Hamlet had been away, the beautiful, tender-hearted Ophelia, overcome by the death of her father, slain, too, by her own dear Hamlet, had lost her reason. Such a sad picture as she made, wandering about among the peasants, up and down the roadsides, in and out at the royal palace, searching, searching for her lost ones.

One day her brother Laertes, a brave noble youth, once a friend of Hamlet's, came all unexpectedly into the city. Report of his father's death had reached him.

"Where is my father?" thundered he, bursting into the presence of the king.

"He's dead, indeed," replied the king, "and dead by Hamlet's hand."

"Dead by Hamlet's hand!" cried Laertes. "Then where's my sister? Is she too —? but just here the poor girl entered, dressed, as she always was now-a-days, in flowers, and ribbons, and grasses, and singing her sad wild songs.

Laertes looked upon her, dumb with surprise. "O my sister! O my sister!" cried he, bursting into tears. "My sister's reason's gone! My sister's reason's gone!"

"There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember; and there's pansies, that's for

thoughts," said Ophelia, approaching her brother. "And there's fennel for you, and columbines; there's rue for you; and here's some for me; we may call it herb of grace o'Sundays; you may wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy: I would give you some violets; but they withered all when my father died," said she, sadly and thoughtfully. "Yes, my father's dead. He will not come again! He will not come again!"

"Tell me, thou king, how came my sister thus? If any grief did this, the man that caused that grief, I'll hunt to death. Revenge shall know no bounds."

"Come with me to some quiet place, that I may tell thee all," said the king, feigning great grief and sorrow.

Laertes heard the king's story, "I'll follow him! I'll slay him! I will not rest until I've met him face to face! O, my father! O, my sister!"

"But hark, what sound is that! 'Tis women's voices lifted in wailing! What new offence hath happened!"

"Your sister! Oh, your sister! Your sister is drowned!" cried the queen, bursting into the presence chamber where Laertes and the king were plotting their revenge against Hamlet. "Your sister's drowned! O, woe is me that I should live to see these sorrows follow each on each!"

"O Gertrude! Gertrude!" wailed the hypocritical king, "when sorrows come they come not as single spies, but in battalions."

As Hamlet, accompanied by his faithful friend Horatio, drew near the castle, they passed through the village graveyard. There, digging and singing the grave-digger worked away.

"Has this fellow no feeling that he can sing at grave-making?" asked Hamlet.

[*Throws up a skull.*

Ham. That skull the grave-digger threw out had a tongue in it, and could sing once.

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. I will speak to this fellow : — Whose grave's this, sir?

Clo. Mine, sir. —

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed ; for thou liest in't.

Clo. You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not your's ; for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine ; 'tis for the dead, not for the quick ; therefore thou liest.

Clo. 'Tis a quick lie, sir ; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig for ?

Clo. For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman, then ?

Clo. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't ?

Clo. One that was a woman, sir ; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How long hast thou been a grave maker ?

Clo. Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fontinbras.

Ham. How long's that since?

Clo. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: It was that very day that young Hamlet was born: he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, why was he sent into England?

Clo. Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

Clo. "Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

Clo. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

Clo. 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

Clo. Why, here in Denmark; I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years. Here's a skull now hath lain i' the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

Clo. A mad fellow's it was; Whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

Clo. A mad rogue! he poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

Ham. This?

[*Takes the skull.*

Clo. E'en that.

Ham. Alas, poor Yorick! — I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath

bore me on his back a thousand times ; and now how



abhorred in my imagination it is ! But soft ! but soft !
aside : — Here comes the king.

Enter Priests, etc., in procession; the corpse of Ophelia, Laertes, and Mourners following; King, Queen, their Trains, etc.

Ham. The queen, the courtiers: Who is this they follow?
Sit we awhile, and watch.



Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranty: Her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet!

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest. No more be done!

We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *requiem*, and such rest to her, a suicide,
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' the earth;—
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! — I tell thee, churlish priest,

A minist'ring angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia !

Queen. Sweets to the sweet ; Farewell !

[*Scattering flowers.*

I hop'd thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife, sweet maid.

Laer. O, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on him

Whose wicked deed drove my sweet sister mad.

—Hold off the earth a while

Till I have caught her once more in my arms :

[*Leaps into the grave.*

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead ;

Till of this flat a mountain you have made,

To o'ertop the skyish head

Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis ? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded heroes ? this is I,

Hamlet, the Dane. [*Leaps into the grave.*

I lov'd Ophelia ; forty thousand brothers

Could not, with all their quantity of love,

Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her ?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. Dost thou come here to whine ?

To outface me with leaping in her grave ?

Be buried quick with her, and so will I :

And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres.

Queen. This is mere madness :
And thus a while the fit will work on him ;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,
His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir ;
What is the reason that you use me thus ?
I lov'd you ever ; But it is no matter ;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, the dog 'll have his day,

It was out of the grief and the anger of Laertes, for his father and sister that Hamlet's uncle plotted his destruction. He induced Laertes, under cover of peace and reconciliation, to challenge Hamlet to a friendly trial of skill in fencing.

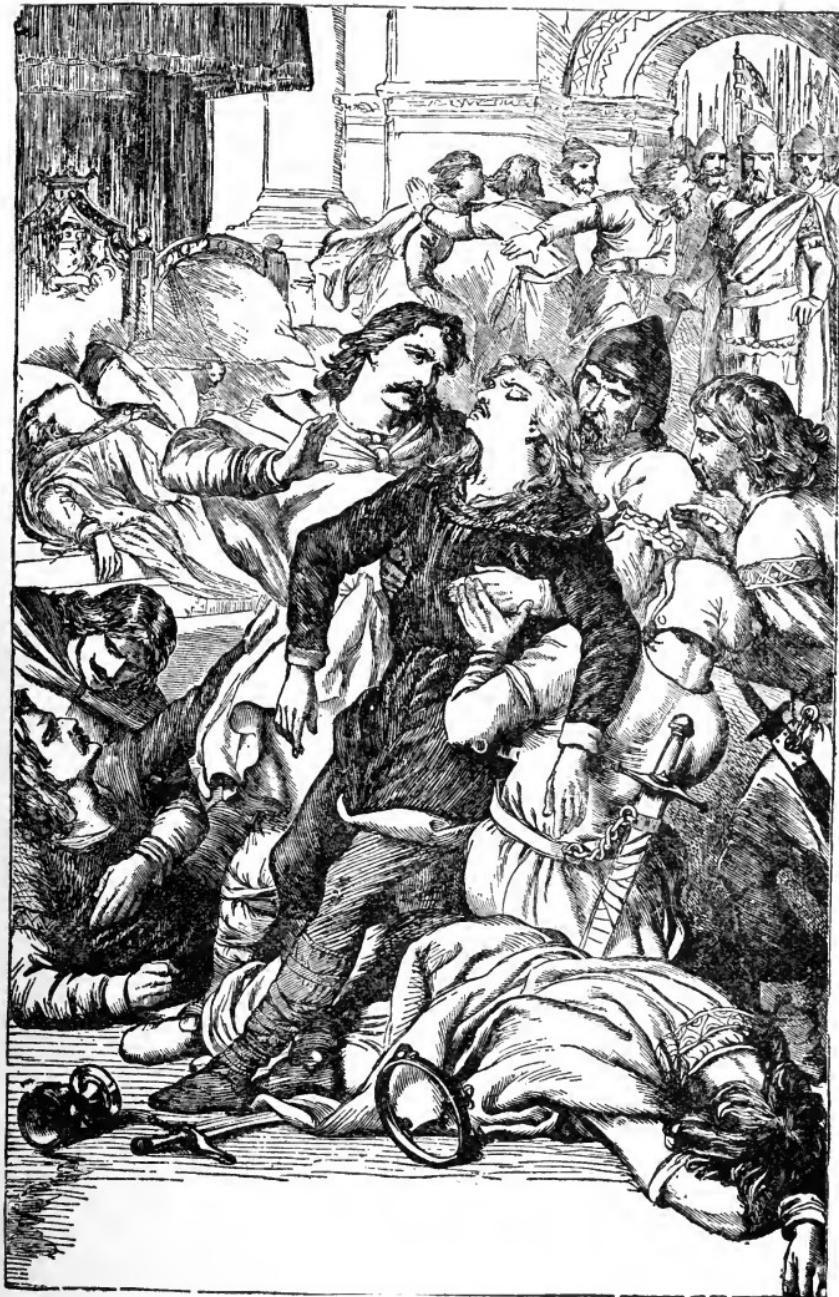
" We will prepare a poisoned weapon," said the king, " which you shall use."

At this match all the court was present ; for Laertes and Hamlet were known to excel in this sort of play. Hamlet, honorable, and supposing Laertes to be so, did not notice that the sword Laertes chose was pointed and uncovered.

For a few moments in the contest, Laertes dallied swords and so gave Hamlet some advantage.

" Drink, drink, drink to our son, Hamlet !" shouted the false king, pretending great joy.

Then Laertes made a thrust with his sword, giving



DEATH OF HAMLET.

Hamlet a deadly wound. Instantly Hamlet saw the treachery, rushed upon Laertes and wrenching the poisoned sword from his hand plunged it into his side.

"O villainy, villainy!" cried Hamlet. "Let the doors be locked. Treachery, treachery! I will hunt this treachery to the end of the earth."

"It is here, Hamlet," cried Laertes; Hamlet, thou art slain;

No medicine in the world can do thee good;
In thee there is not half an hour's life;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated, and envenom'd: the foul practice
Hath turned itself on me; lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poisoned;
I can no more; the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point envenomed too!

Then, venom, to thy work.

[*Stabs the King.*

Laer. Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me! [*Laertes dies.*

Ham. Heaven make me free of it! I follow thee.
I am dying, Horatio:—Wretched queen, adieu!—
Had I but time, O, I could tell you,—
But let it be:—Horatio, I am dying,
Thou liv'st: report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

[*Hamlet dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart;—Good-night, sweet
prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

OTHELLO,

THE MOOR OF VENICE.



THE TRIAL SCENE.

OTHELLO.

A Tale of Jealousy.

In the wonderful city of Venice, there lived long years ago a rich Senator, known as Brabantio, whose daughter, Desdemona, "the gentle Desdemona," as she was called, was famed in all the states about for her marvellous grace and beauty.

Not a day passed but there came to bow himself before her, some prince, some duke, some gentleman of high estate. But of them all not one did please the gentle maid.

"It is the mind, not the features of the man that must win my hand," she would say, as one after another of her handsome suitors she dismissed.

At last there came to Brabantio's house, a Moor, whose stories of hardship, imprisonment, and sorrow so touched her tender sympathy, and whose tales of

travel, and of war, and of adventure so roused her admiration that Desdemona's heart was quite subdued, "even to the very quality of her lord."

Now, the Moor had no fortune, was of a foreign, hardly civilized race, so the people of Europe thought—and more and worst of all, he was of a complexion so dark as to be almost repulsive.

Little hope had he or Desdemona that Brabantio would receive him as a son-in-law. Accordingly, an elopement was arranged, as was the fashion of the times.

Now, it chanced that there dwelt in this same city one Iago, a soldier of fine training, who, by Brabantio's influence in state, had been made to take an inferior rank of office, while the Moor, a comparative stranger in the city, had been given higher honors, and had been put in command above Iago.

For this, Iago, the evil genius of the play, determines to have his revenge.

"I would not follow him," said Roderigo, a rejected suitor of Desdemona's, when Iago told him of the honors put upon the Moor.

"O, sir, content you," answered Iago, with a wicked look,
"I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly followed.
It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:

In following him, I follow but myself ;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end :
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at : I am not what I am."

"And now," continued Iago, his hatred seeking some object upon which to feed itself, "let us call up her father. He does not yet know that this night his fair young Desdemona has eloped with this same black Moor. Let's call him up. Rouse him !"

Make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets ; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies : though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,
As it may lose some color.

Rod. Here is her father's house ; I'll call aloud.

Iago. Do : with light, timorous accent and dire yell,
As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

Rod. What, ho ! Brabantio ! signior Brabantio, ho !

Iago. Awake ! what, ho ! Brabantio ! thieves ! thieves !
thieves !

Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags !
Thieves ! thieves !

BRABANTIO, above at a window.

Bra. What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

Rod. Signor, is all your family within?



Iago. Are your doors locked?

Bra. Why? wherefore ask you this?

Iago. Sir, you are robbed; for shame, put on your gown;

Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;

Arise, I say.

Bra. What, have you lost your wits?

Rod. Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

Bra. Not I; what are you?

Rod. My name is — Roderigo.

Bra. The worse welcome.

I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors:

In honest plainness thou hast heard me say,

My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,

Being full of supper, and distempering draughts,

Upon malicious bravery dost thou come.

To start my quiet.

Rod. Patience, good sir.

Bra. What tell'st thou me of robbing?

This is Venice. My house is not a grange.

Rod. Most grave Brabantio, in simple and pure soul I come to you.

Iago. Sir! you are one of those that will not serve God, if the devil bid you.

Bra. You are a villain!

Iago. You are — a Senator.

Bra. You shall answer for this. I know you, Roderigo.

Rod. Sir, I will answer anything. But If't be your pleasure, and most wise consent (As partly I find it is), that your fair daughter, At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night, Has been transported —

If this be known to you, and your allowance, We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs; But if you know not this, my manners tell me, We have your wrong rebuke.

Your daughter hath left her home.

Straight satisfy yourself ;
If she be in her chamber, or your house,
Let loose on me the justice of the state
For thus deluding you.

Bra. Strike on the tinder, ho !
Give me a taper, — call up all my people : —
This accident is not unlike my dream ;
Belief of it oppresses me already : —
Light, I say ! light !

THE TRIAL SCENE.

We would not care to hear the cursing and the wailing of old Brabantio, nor the sneers and jeers of Iago when it was proved that Desdemona had indeed escaped.

Enough for us, after so many, many years gone by, that we know Brabantio, angry, disgraced, broken-hearted, hurried to the Duke.

"Why, what's the matter?" exclaimed the Duke, as Brabantio, half dressed, all out of breath, rushed into the hall where the Duke was busy with this self-same Moor and other officers, delivering to them commands with which on the following day they were to set forth against a foreign foe.

"The matter ! O my daughter ! O my daughter ! "

Sen.

Dead !

Bra.

Ay, to me :

Stol'n from me,

By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks :

For nature so preposterously to err,

Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,

Sans witchcraft could not —

Duke. Whoe'er he be that hath done this,

The bloody book of law

You shall yourself read in the bitter letter,

After your own sense ; yea, though our proper son

Stood in your action.

Bra. Humbly I thank your grace.

Here is the man, this Moor : whom now it seems,

Your special mandate for the state affairs

Hath hither brought.

Duke and Sen. We are sorry for it.

Duke. What, in your own part, can you say to this ?

[*To OTHELLO.*

Bra. Nothing, but this is so.

Oth. Most potent, grave, and reverend seigniors,

My very noble and approv'd good masters, —

That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,

It is most true ; true, I have married her ;

The very head and front of my offending

Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,

And little bless'd with the set phrase of peace ;

For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,

Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
Their dearest action in the tented field ;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle ;
And therefore little shall I grace my cause,
In speaking for myself : yet, by your gracious patience,
I will a round, unvarnished tale deliver
Of my whole course of love ; what drugs, what charms
What conjuration and what mighty magic
(For such proceeding I am charged withal),
I won his daughter with.

Bra.

A maiden never bold ;

Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion
Blush'd at herself : And she—in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, everything—
To fall in love with what she feared to look on !
It is a judgment maim'd and most imperfect,
That will confess perfection so could err
Against all rules of nature ; and must be driven
To find out practices of cunning hell
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
He wrought upon her.

Duke.

To vouch this, is no proof ;

Without more certain and more overt test.

Oth. Her father lov'd me ; oft invited me ;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year ; the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd.

I ran it through, even from my boyish days
To the very moment that he bade me tell it.
Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field ;
Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent, deadly breach ;
Of being taken by the insolent foe
And sold to slavery ; of my redemption thence,
And portance in my travel's history,
Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven.
It was my hint to speak, such was the process ;
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. These things to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline :
But still the house affairs would draw her thence ;
Which ever as she could with haste despatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse : which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour, and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intentively : I did consent ;
And often did beguile her of her tears
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffered. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs :
She swore, "In faith 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange ;
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful ;

She wish'd she had not heard it; yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man." She thank'd me;
And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake;
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd;
And I lov'd her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd:
Here comes the lady, let her witness it.
Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best:
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.

Bra. I pray you hear her speak;
If she confess that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man! — Come hither, gentle mistress;
Do you perceive in all this noble company
Where most you owe obedience?

Des. My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty:
To you I am bound for life and education;
My life and education both do learn me
How to respect you: you are the lord of duty,
I am hitherto your daughter: but here's my husband:
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord,

Bra. God be with you! — I have done.

Please it, your grace, on to the state affairs.

Come hither, Moor :

I here do give thee that with all my heart,
Which — but thou hast already — with all my heart
I would keep from thee. For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child ;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them, — I have done, my lord.

Duke. Let me speak like yourself ; and lay a sentence
Which, as a grise or step, may help these lovers
Into your favor.

When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone,
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief ;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

Iago would have been glad if the Duke had exiled Othello from the state. He had hardly counted on the tender delicacy and gentle refinement Othello had shown in his defense ; still less had he counted on its almost soothing effect upon Brabantio.

And so, when Roderigo told him what had happened in the Duke's palace, how grandly Othello had carried himself, and how mildly Brabantio and the Duke had dismissed the matter, Iago shut his teeth together, and a wicked glare came into his eye as he muttered, "I'll try another way to kill this hateful Moor." And when Roderigo, simple youth, began to weep and

bemoan his own loss of Desdemona, Iago said, "Come, come, be a man. Don't talk of drowning yourself. Drown cats and blind puppies. Put money in thy purse—money, money, money—dost understand? You know not what fate may overtake the Moor. Put money in thy purse. I tell you she will yet be yours."



IAGO AND RODERIGO.

"Oh, can you promise me?" cried Roderigo, wiping away his tears like a five-year old boy.

"Yes, yes! Haven't I told you that I hate this

Moor? Now go, and talk no more of drowning. Do you hear?"

"I hear, I hear!"

"Then go. Farewell—and don't forget, put money in thy purse."

Thus do I ever make my food my purse;
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
If I would time expend with such a snipe,
But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;
He holds me well;
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio's a proper man; let me see now;
To get his place, and to plumie up my will;
A double knavery,— How? how?— Let me see:—
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear.
I hav't:— it is engender'd:— hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

[*Exit.*]

No sooner had all arrived in Cypress, than Iago began to carry out his villainous scheme. He had studied human nature well and deeply. He knew that nothing could more make Othello's life one scene of wretchedness than to make him jealous of his lovely young wife. And Cassio, the brave, handsome Cassio, should be the means through which the plot should work!

Iago wasted no time. At once he began to work. His first step was to entice Cassio, while on guard, to

drink with him. "Let's drink the health of the lovely Desdemona," said Iago.

"To the lovely Desdemona, who is as wise as she is beautiful!" answered Cassio.

And so they drank — or rather Cassio did — once, twice, thrice, until, poor, foolish Cassio, his reason gone, became so noisy and so quarrelsome that Othello came to reprimand him, supposing he should find in the tent from which the noise came some common soldiers in a drunken quarrel.

"Tell me," thundered Othello, "how this foul rout began; who set it on? 'Tis monstrous! Iago, who began it?"

Now was Iago's opportunity. Cassio was drunk — disgraced before his master. But one thing more to raise himself in Othello's esteem, and that at Cassio's wretched cost; and so with show of grief, surprise and sad regret that Cassio should so have forgotten the honor of his guard-ship, Iago addressed himself to the angry commander.

"Othello, my good master, I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth, than it should do offence to Michael Cassio. Yet, I persuade myself to speak the truth. Shall nothing wrong him. Thus it is, general:

Montana and myself being in speech together,
There comes to us a fellow crying for help;
And Cassio following with determined sword

To execute upon him.
I heard the clink and fall of swords
And Cassio high in oath.
I found them close together
At blow and thrust ; even as they were
When you yourself did part them.
More of this matter cannot I report.
But men are men ; the best sometimes forget,
Tho' Cassio did some little wrong to him
As men in rage strike those that wish them best,
Yet surely, Cassio, I believe, received
From him that fled some strange indignity
Which patience could not pass.

"I know, Iago," answered Othello, "thy honesty and love doth mince this matter, making it light for Cassio's sake. Cassio, I love thee, but never more be an officer of mine."

Poor Cassio ! Now thoroughly sobered, as Othello stalked away, he threw himself upon a chair crying :

"O my reputation, my reputation ! Iago, I have lost my reputation."

But Iago was not one to be moved by the suffering of his victims.

"As I am an honest man," sneered Iago, "I thought you had received some bodily wound ; there is more offence in that than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false imposition , oft got without merit, and lost without deserving. You have lost no reputa-

tion at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser. What, man ! there are ways to recover the general again. You are but now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than in malice ; even so as one would beat his offenceless dog, to affright an imperious lion. Sue to him again and he is yours.”



IAGO AND CASSIO.

“I will rather sue to be despised, than to deceive so good a commander, with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer,” wailed Cassio. “Drunk ? and speak parrot ? and squabble ! swagger ! swear ! and

discourse fustin with one's own shadow? O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee — devil."

"What was he that you followed with your sword? what had he done to you?

"I know not?

"Is it possible?

"I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore. O, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!"

"Why, but you are now well enough. How came you thus recovered?"

"It hath pleased the devil drunkenness, to give place to the devil wrath. One unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself."

"Come, you are too severe a moraller. As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good."

"I will ask him for my place again; he shall tell me I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! O strange! — Every inordinate cup is unblessed, and the ingredient is a devil!"

"Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used ; exclaim no more against it. And, good lieutenant, I think, you think I love you."

"I have well approved it, sir.—I drunk !"

"You, or any man living, may be drunk at some time, man. I'll tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general. I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation of her beauty ; confess yourself freely to her ; importune her ; she'll help to put you in your place again : she is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice in her goodness, not to do more than she is requested. This broken joint between you and her husband, entreat her to splinter ; and, my fortune against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before."

"You advise me well."

"I protest, in the sincerity of love, and honest kindness."

"I think it freely ; and betimes in the morning, I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me. I am desperate of my fortunes, if they check me here."

"You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant ; I must to the watch."

"Good night, honest Iago."

But I am sure you see now what Iago's plan was.

And it succeeded, better indeed than Iago, hopeful as he ever was for the success of villainy, had dared to hope.

For Othello, seeing Cassio and Desdemona often together as Iago planned they should be, hearing his gentle wife plead for the boy Cassio that he be forgiven and reinstated in his former office, and more than this catching the knowing, overwise expression which Iago took pains to wear when ever they were all together, Othello's jealousy was indeed aroused — and once aroused, its fury knew no bounds.

"They shall die. They both shall die," thundered he. "Iago, do you hear? I say they both shall die. See to it — now mind you — that Cassio sees not the morrow's sun."

Iago, villain that he was, was only too glad to be thus commissioned. "It shall be done, cruel as it seems," answered he, his voice trembling with feigned emotion.

"And I," groaned Othello, "will to Desdemona."

Poor Desdemona and poor Othello! Could he have seen the triumphant wicked light in Iago's eyes as he left the hall, what wretchedness might have been spared!

And so Othello, driven on by blind, unreasoning jealousy, killed the "gentle Desdemona" the beautiful, innocent, loving Desdemona.



IAGO AND OTHELLO.

Little wonder is it that Othello, horrified when he learned what a cruel, unjust thing he had done, beside himself with grief and pain, and, most bitter of all, remorse, plunged into his own heart the same cruel dagger.

"O, Desdemona, Desdemona!" cried the wretched man. "My innocent, gentle Desdemona! Know, kind friends, that I loved this fair girl — yes, loved her — I loved her not wisely, but too well."

We pity Othello, we pity Desdemona, and we hate Iago. There are many lessons to be taken home to our own hearts in this play. By and by, as you grow older and become, as I trust you will, a real student of Shakespeare, you will read much and hear much said of the character of Othello; whether he should be condemned for his action, be respected for it, or be pitied for it. There is much to be said on all sides,—that we grant.

But I wonder if, of all the life lessons contained in this play of Othello, there is any that touches closer to our everyday lives, closer to our hearts than this: that the fate of Othello and Desdemona should teach us to trust those who love us, to be frank with them, to shun suspicion, scorn the thought that dares intrude itself between ourselves and them.

Many, many years ago there was a wise writer, Francis Bacon, who said, "Suspicious among thoughts are like bats among birds; they fly ever by twilight."

Let us repress and guard them ; for they cloud the mind, they lose friends. Suspicions that the mind gathers of itself are but buzzes ; but the suspicions that are put into our heads by the tales and whisperings of others have stings."

Bacon then goes on to advise — and it is such good advice, good for his century and equally good for ours — that the best way to clear the woods of these hateful night-birds is to go straight to the friend we suspect and learn the truth. If we are truly noble, truly loyal to our better selves and to our friends, we shall know that this is the only just course.

The world is full of broken friendships, and broken hearts, too, I fancy, many, many of which might so easily have been made whole, if, at the beginning, there had been one honest, frank word.

CYMBELINE,

KING OF BRITAIN.



CYMBELINE.

CYMBELINE.

Long, long ago, when Augustus Cæsar was emperor of Rome, and England was called Britain, there lived a king named Cymbeline.

This Cymbeline, when his good wife died, was left with three little children,—a beautiful daughter, Imogen, and two little baby boys. In some mysterious way, these little princes were stolen from their royal nursery. This was a terrible blow to the proud king. Every means possible was employed to recover the children; the kingdom was searched from limit to limit; couriers were sent in every direction; rewards were offered and threats were published; but no trace of the children was found.

As time went on, Cymbeline married a second time. This woman, who was a scheming, malicious person, proved a cruel step-mother to the fair Imogen. She had one son, Cloten, to whom she was determined to

marry the young princess ; for in that way she knew the royal power would still be in her own line even though Cymbeline should die.

"I hate Imogen," this selfish woman would say, "but I do not forget that it is she, not I, who would be queen if Cymbeline should die. As the wife of my son, she would still be under my control, and my position here at least would be secure."

Now it happened many years before the time of this story, that Cymbeline had had a very dear friend, a gentlemanly, scholarly man, who, when dying, had begged that Cymbeline would care for his little child and its young mother. Very soon the young mother died ; then the little boy was taken to Cymbeline's court, and there brought up with Imogen in every way as if he was Cymbeline's own child. Imogen and the lad Posthumus played together, studied together under the same masters, and so grew up very fond of each other.

The Queen had never thought of such a thing as that Imogen and Posthumus would fall in love with each other, and so thwart her plans for Cloten. "Posthumus is a noble youth," she would often say, "but he has no wealth and no position. Imogen and Posthumus have been brought up together from babyhood. Cymbeline would never allow his daughter to look upon a nameless youth like Posthumus as a suitor."

But imagine the queen's anger, when one day, she

learned that Posthumus and Imogen, taking affairs into their own hands, had stolen away to a priest and been secretly married.

Hurrying to the king, she told him what had happened. The king was beside himself with rage. "My daughter, my daughter, married to this penniless, nameless youth ! How dare she so disgrace the royal name ! See to it, now, remember, that she be closely confined in her own apartments, and that she be placed under close guard. As to Posthumus, I will see that he is banished at once from the kingdom. Go now to Imogen, and I will to Posthumus."

The queen, delighted thus to have Imogen in her power, renewed at once her plans for the future. "I will appear," thought she, "to be Imogen's friend. I will even arrange a meeting between her and Posthumus before the youth is banished. Thus shall I control this fair daughter, more easily, by and by. For when once the sharpness of her grief is over, I will persuade her that this secret marriage was no marriage at all ; and that in no way can she reinstate herself in her father's confidence more easily than to look with encouragement upon this suit of Cloten's."

"Surely, my daughter," she said, "you will not find me an evil-eyed jailer. Listen to your father with patience ; and I meantime will do my best to turn the fire of rage that's in him. Moreover, an interview with your husband I will bring about before he leaves the court."

But Imogen was not deceived. Too long had she suffered under this wicked woman's scheming not to know that this present kindness was but a cover for some hidden cruelty.

"Posthumus," said Imogen, "we may never meet again. And here's this diamond. It was my mother's. Take it, heart, and wear it forever for my sake."

"And you, dear Imogen, wear for me this bracelet. It is a manacle of love. See, I clasp it upon this fairest prisoner."

But hark ! Cymbeline bursts open the door upon them. "Hence, hence, thou basest, vilest thing ! away—and if thou dost in this court again appear, I swear I'll have thee slain !" thundered Cymbeline.

Poor Posthumus ! Poor Imogen ! It was a bitter ending of their last meeting ; but the queen at least was happy. Now would Cymbeline demand a closer watch kept on his daughter ; and she it was who would establish herself the prison-keeper.

Posthumus, with heavy heart, joyless, and with hope all gone, sailed away to Rome. On reaching there, he fell in with some gay young men, wealthy, with plenty of time and money ; and as was the fashion of such men, much given to wager-making. One evening they chanced to fall to praising each his wife or lady love.

"Ah, but not one there lives so beautiful, so wise, so true as mine," sighed Posthumus, when each in most extravagant language had set forth his lady's charms.

"You are deceived," cried Iachimo. "I'll wager much I can go to Britain and win this fair lady away from you. That very bracelet which she so faithfully did promise to wear for you,—Faugh! I'll bring it back to show she gave it to me."

And so, foolish man that he was, he sailed for Britain to steal the beautiful Imogen's heart away, or rather to steal the bracelet away, thereby showing to his friends at Rome how foolish was the young Briton, Posthumus.

We hardly need consider very much his visit. It is enough for us just now that he arrived at Cymbeline's court, was cordially received by Imogen as one who could tell her of her much-loved Posthumus, that he bribed a servant into assisting him to steal the bracelet, and that in great triumph he returned with it to his friends at Rome.

Posthumus was dumb with surprise. Then in a burst of jealous rage, he wrote to Pisanio, an attendant of Imogen's, telling him that he had undeniable proof that she was false, and bidding him to carry her to a seaport of Wales, and there kill her. You see killing wives in those days seemed to be quite the fashion.

Accordingly Pisanio went to Imogen and said, "Good mistress, Posthumus himself is at Milford-Haven. He defies your father's threats for love of you, and comes again to see you."

"Posthumus at Milford-Haven!" cried she. "O take me there at once. O, for a winged horse! How far is it, Pisanio? Tell me. How long before we can reach there? Haste, now haste, Pisanio, and let us go at once—at once, at once, I say."

Thus Pisanio and Imogen set forth. But on the journey, Pisanio's love for his gentle mistress overcame his sense of duty to his old master, and he could not bring himself to think of killing her.

"Dear lady," said he, "Posthumus is not here. O, wretched, wretched man that I am. I have brought you here under the falsest, basest lie. Read this from Posthumus. And see he bade me bring you here to kill you. Iachimo, the villain that so recently did visit you, purporting to be so great a friend of yours and his, hath told Posthumus that you were false to him,—and so—he bade me—kill you."

Poor Imogen! Sorrow and disappointment, wounded pride, and above all, a bitter sense of loss weighed her down to the very earth. "O, kill me, kill me," wailed she, "I have nothing now to live for. Be honest, and do thy master's bidding. And when this master again you see, bear witness that I did obey his bidding."

But Pisanio would not. "Come back, come back to your father's court. O, gracious lady, believe me, since I received command to do this wretched business, I have not slept one wink."



PIS ANIO AND IMOGEN.

"I will *never* go back to my father's court," sobbed Imogen. "Rather will I wander up and down the earth."

Then Pisanio brought forth a suit of boy's apparel, saying, "I knew, good lady, that you would not again to your father's house, and so"—

"Very likely; since you brought me here to kill me," interrupted Imogen, bitterly.

"No, no, not that—but I brought this suit of clothes that you might so array yourself that, as a boy, you may travel more in safety."

Caring little whether she lived or died, whether she fell among friends or foes, whether peril or safety should be her lot, she took the garments, and sent Pisanio back to the court.



BELARIUS AND THE TWO PRINCES.

In a forest cave not many miles distant lived a forester named Belarius. Many years before, he had

been most unjustly accused by Cymbeline of treason, and had been banished from the kingdom. Perhaps you may already have suspected that Imogen, when she set forth upon her journeying, would find her long-lost brothers. And true enough she did. For it was this Belarius who in revenge had stolen the children from Cymbeline, and had, all these years, been living concealed in the forest not many miles away from the court.

It was to the rude home of this old banished subject and his stolen boys that Imogen wandered.

Very tenderly had Belarius brought up these youths, for he loved them; carefully had he educated them, and now they were indeed princely-looking youths, bold and daring, full of honor, brave and true.

Belarius and his foster-children were hunting when Imogen wandered into this forest and found the cave in which they lived. She had lost her way, and was dying of hunger. O, how glad she was to find in this great cave food and shelter.

"I'll enter, and I'll eat because I must. I'll draw my sword, and if my enemy fear it as I do fear it, he'll flee at the very sight of it," added she, with a weary sigh.

Soon Belarius and the young princes returned. As Belarius entered, he paused and said, "Youths, come not in. An angel or a fairy sits at our table. Such beauty! such grace!"



IMOGEN ENTERING THE CAVE.

"Good masters," said Imogen, coming forward, "I ask your pardon that I am here ; but I was so hungry, sirs. I have not meant to steal your food. See, I gladly pay you for it ; and had you not come, I would have left this purse upon your table."

"Keep your gold, fair youth !" cried the brothers, Guiderius and Arviragus. "Such as we have, you are more than welcome to."

"And stay with us," added Belarius. "It is almost night — too late for such as you to wander through this forest. Pray do not measure our minds by this rude dwelling-place of ours ; but stay and let us prove ourselves your friends."

Gladly did the weary, heart-sick Imogen accept their noble hospitality. Day after day she stayed, every day growing more dear to them, and they more dear to her. "But for you, my Posthumus," she would often say to herself, as she busied herself about the cave, "I could gladly live out my days and die in here with these wild forest youths."

One day when Belarius and the lads had gone away to hunt, Imogen feeling ill and weary, bethought herself of a little phial of medicine that Pisanio had given her.

Now this medicine was a strange drug — it had the power to put a person into a heavy death-like sleep. The queen had given it to Pisanio for Imogen some time before, telling him that it was a most excel-



THE FINDING OF THE LIFELESS BODY OF FIDELE.

lent medicine. She did not tell him that she had procured it from her doctor as a poison; nor did she know that the doctor, suspecting some malicious

intent on her part, had given her a simple sleeping potion.

And so it was that when Belarius and the princes returned, they found the dear Fidele, for by that name she was known to them, apparently dead. Bitterly did these foresters lament her loss ; and, carrying her out beneath the great blue sky, they buried her in a mound of leaves and sweet flowers. Leaning over her the princes said, "Dear, gentle youth ! while summer lasts, each day will we strew thy sad grave with flowers. The pale primrose, the flower so like thy pale, sweet face ; the blue-bell, so like thy clear, blue veins ; the eglantine, so like thy sweet, pure breath—all these, and more, O Fidele, Fidele, will we strew daily over thee. Yes, and when the winter comes and the flowers all are gone, then with soft green moss we'll cover thee."

By and by the heavy stupor passed away ; and Imogen, shaking off her covering of flowers, arose. "I have been dreaming," said she, " I dreamed I lived in a cave—that there were three noble foresters—but it must have been a dream—all a dream. How came I here, I wonder, covered with these flowers ? I have been asleep—I must have dreamed. Now I must go on my journey—it is to Posthumus I must go."

But wonderful things had been going on in the kingdom during these long weeks. A great war had broken out between Cymbeline and Augustus Cæsar,

the Roman emperor. A Roman army had landed in Great Britain, and was at this very time pushing on through this very forest in which Imogen was wandering.

With this army came Posthumus, intending when he reached the battle-field, to join the king's forces and fight for his own dear country. Little cared he what fate should be his. "What matters it, now that the false Imogen is dead—dear, dear Imogen—whether I die upon the battle-field or live in exile from my home."

But Imogen, as we know, was not dead; and was nearer meeting her impetuous though loving husband than either of them dreamed. For in the forest, she had been overtaken and captured by the Roman army, and had been given over to serve as a page to the Roman general.

The young princes, and old Belarius too, had joined Cymbeline's forces:—so here they all were, Cymbeline and his lost sons, Belarius the exile, Imogen and her banished husband, yes, and even Pisanio who was serving as the king's attendant—all together upon the battle-field.

It was a terrible battle—so closely fought that it was often doubtful which side was winning. But Fortune at last turned her favor upon the British side, and Cymbeline was the conqueror. Into his hands fell the Roman general Lucius and all his officers.

All together, these officers and our friends stood before the British king, each to receive his punishment or his reward.

Imogen recognized at once her long-sought Posthumus, Pisanio recognized Imogen, then there was the false Iachimo, with the very diamond ring upon his hand that Imogen had given Posthumus, and which Posthumus had given Iachimo, when he had brought the bracelet from England back to Rome. The princes, too, started, as they saw the little page. "Looks that not like our Fidele?" asked one of them.

"Two sands could not be more alike," answered the other. "And yet it cannot be. We saw Fidele dead. We buried him beneath the flowers."

When Lucius, the Roman general, stood before the king, he said

"Consider, sir, the chance of war: the day
Was yours by accident; had it gone with us,
We should not when the blood was cool, have threaten'd
Our prisoners with the sword. But since the gods
Will have it thus, that nothing but our lives
May be called ransom, let it come; sufficeth,
A Roman with a Roman's heart can suffer.
Augustus lives to think on't; and so much
For my peculiar care. This one thing only
I will entreat: my boy, a Briton born,
Let him be ransom'd; never master had
A page so kind, so duteous, diligent,

So tender over his occasions, true,
Sofeat, so nurse-like : let his virtue join
With my request, which, I'll make bold, your highness
Cannot deny ; he hath done no Briton harm,
Though he have served a Roman. Save him, sir,
And spare no blood beside.

Earnestly did Cymbeline look into the page's face.

I have surely seen him :

His favor is familiar to me —

Boy, thou hast looked thyself into my grace,
And art mine own. — I know not why, nor wherefore,
To say, live, boy ; ne'er thank thy master ; live.
And ask of Cymbeline what boon thou wilt,
Fitting my bounty, and thy state, I'll give it ;
Yea, though thou do demand a prisoner,
The noblest ta'en.

"Most humbly do I thank your highness," said Imogen, bowing low. "And if I may indeed ask what I will of you, much as I do prize my liberty, much as I would wish to free my kind, good Roman master, yet first of all I must make this my one request—that this man Iachimo be made to tell how came he in possession of this diamond ring."

Iachimo turned pale. Posthumus started forward. Pisanio shrank away.

"Speak, man," thundered the king, "and tell the truth ; or by our greatness and the grace of it, bitter torture shall be put upon you until the truth be told."

Since we know the story Iachimo must tell, we will spare ourselves the hearing of it.



IACHIMO AND THE RING.

It was a wonderful revelation to all. And when Belarius heard the story, and noted the joy in Imogen's sweet eyes, and the tears upon the king's hard face, he, too, came forward, told the story of the stolen princes, gave them over to their father's keeping, and bowed before the king ready to receive his sentence.



CYMBELINE WELCOMES HIS DAUGHTER.

Cymbeline's heart was full. Too well he knew that he first had wronged Belarius. Then, too, he had no heart for punishments in this glad hour.

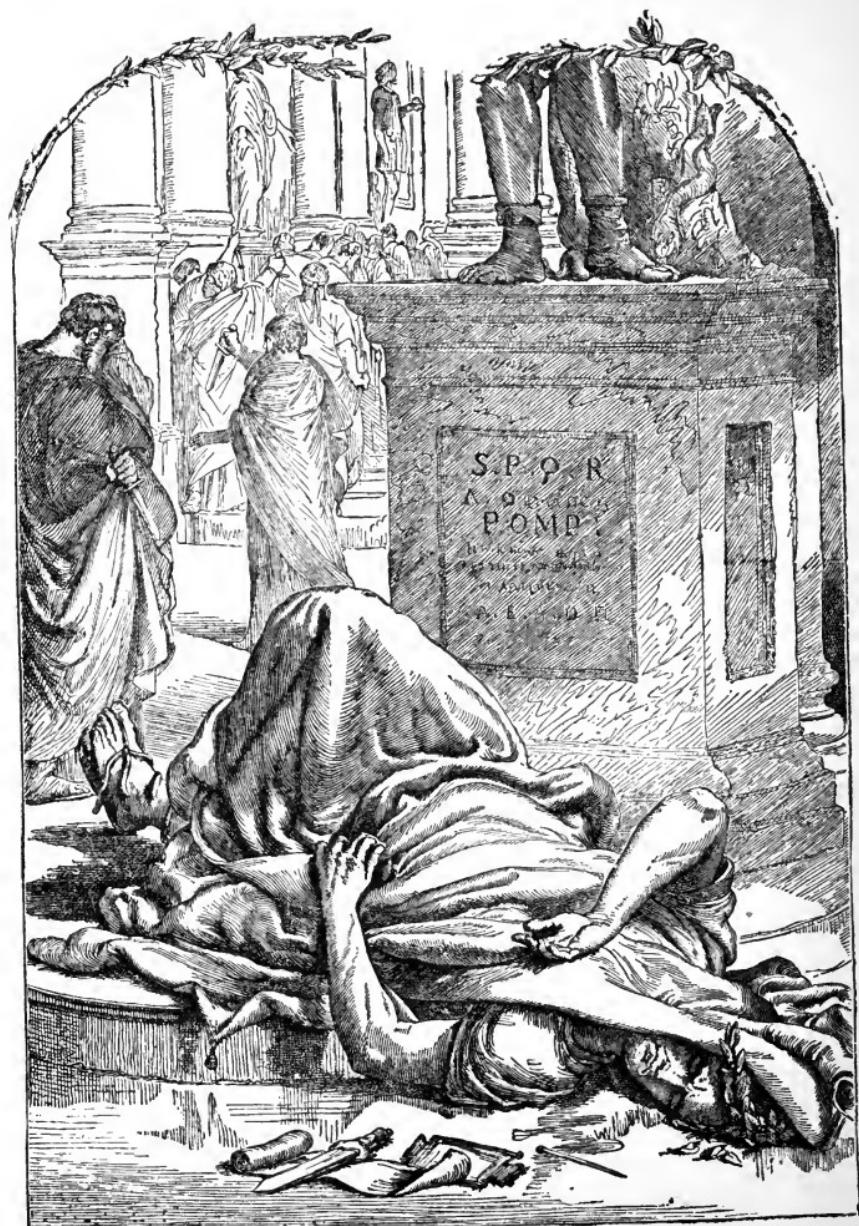
"A king's blessing upon you, Imogen and Posthumus," said he, the tears of joy chasing each other down his soldierly face. "And you, Belarius, art henceforth my brother. And you, brave sons, a father's blessing follow you. And you, most noble Roman foe, most valiant Lucius, return unharmed to Rome, and now

Laud we the gods ;

And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils
From our bless'd altars ! Publish we this peace
To all our subjects. Set we forward ; let
A Roman and a British ensign wave
Friendly together ; so through Lud's town march,
And in the temple of great Jupiter
Our peace we'll ratify ; seal it with feasts. —
Set on there : — never was a war did cease,
Ere bloody hands were wash'd, with such a peace."



JULIUS CÆSAR,



DEATH OF CÆSAR.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

Julius Cæsar is by great writers called the "greatest man of antiquity." Certainly he was marvellously talented, and withal had a will and an ambition that would have won him distinction in any land and in any age.

He was one of the greatest generals of his time. Setting out with his great army, he swept up from Rome, across Europe, across the channel even into the then unknown country of England, conquering tribe after tribe as he swept along. He seemed to know not what failure meant; and as for the people into whose countries he marched, they seemed to believe that it was as useless to contend against "the great Cæsar" as to contend against the gods themselves.

Cæsar was a man of few words ; but those few words were apt to mean volumes. At one time, when he

was carrying on war in Asia Minor, instead of writing out a long report of his successes for the Roman Senate at home, he sent just three words — "Veni, vidi, vici ;"—meaning, "I came, I saw, I conquered." So crisp and full of meaning was this message that it has passed down through the ages as one of the brilliant gems among historic sayings.

While Cæsar was carrying on these wars in Gaul, Rome was governed by three men, a "triumvirate" as it was called, of which Cæsar himself was one. The other two men were Pompey and Cassius. These three men had each pledged themselves to stand loyally by the other, let come what might. But Cæsar was a fiercely ambitious man, and Pompey, I suspect, was equally a jealous man. At any rate, Pompey made good use of his power at home, while Cæsar was engaged in war, to stir up the people to overthrow Cæsar. Accordingly word was sent to the brave general that no longer did Rome need his services, and no longer would she support him as general in the Roman army.

Well did Cæsar know the meaning of all this; and well did he know that the only course for him was to march with his forces straight to Rome and demand justice of the people.

Outside the city was a little river known as the Rubicon. Now, it was one of the laws of Rome that a general returning from war should disband his army

before crossing this river, and a heavy penalty was the consequence if a general failed to obey.

Reaching this river, Cæsar halted and addressed his followers. "We are now about to cross the Rubicon," said he.

As we have just read, Cæsar was a man of few words, and his soldiers had learned to look for the meaning behind their leader's words. Well they knew that to cross the Rubicon meant to defy the Roman government, to bring down upon the city a civil war, and upon themselves death or slavery if, in the civil war, Pompey's party should be victorious.

The army crossed the Rubicon. Now, indeed, there was no escape, no withdrawing from the result of their act—their defiance of Roman law.

"The Rubicon is crossed," said they; "now there is no choice but to go forward."

When Pompey learned that Cæsar had dared thus defy the Roman law—and the Roman law was indeed sacred in those days—he fled the city. Cæsar followed, and a long, terrible war was the result.

And now Cæsar was returning, victorious, to Rome. It was his day of triumph. With music, and golden chariots, great processions of slaves and captives, laden with the rich treasures of the East, Cæsar, in his great triumphal car, was entering the city.

Up and down the streets surged the people, wild with excitement, clamoring and pushing for just one sight of the "mighty Cæsar."

"Hence, home, you idle creatures ! Get you home !" growled Flavius, a Roman tribune, who had good reason to grieve, rather than to rejoice, in Cæsar's triumphal return to the city.

"Yes, home, home, get you home !" added Marulus, another tribune to whom Cæsar's coming meant the downfall of his own glory.

" You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things !
O, you hard hearts, you cruel men of Rome,
Knew you not Pompey ? Many a time and oft
Have you climb'd up to walls and battlements,
To towers and windows, yea, to chimney-tops,
Your infants in your arms, and there have sat
The live-long day, with patient expectation,
To see great Pompey pass the streets of Rome :
And when you saw his chariot but appear,
Have you not made an universal shout,
That Tiber trembled underneath her banks,
To hear the replication of your sounds,
Made in her concave shores ?
And do you now put on your best attire ?
And do you now pull out a holiday ?
And do you now strew flowers in his way,
That comes in triumph over Pompey's blood ?
Begone !
Run to your houses, fall upon your knees,
Pray to the gods to intermit the plague
That needs must light on this ingratitude."

BRUTUS IS AROUSED AGAINST CÆSAR.

Now the procession enters the city. The great conqueror appears. With him are Antony, Cicero, Brutus, Casca, Cassius, Rome's great men. Such a noise! such shouting! such rejoicing! but through it all is heard one voice crying, "Cæsar, Cæsar!"

"Who speaks?" asked the great conqueror.

"I—I speak—I, the soothsayer; and I say to you, Beware the ides of March! The ides of March, remember."

"Away with him," cried Cæsar, impatient at the delay. "On with the procession! He is but a dreamer!"

And so the procession passed on, Cæsar, filled with pride and ambition, having little idea that of the many words which should greet his ear on the grand triumphal day, none would be so full of meaning or of such profound importance as these—"Beware the ides of March!"

"Shall we follow the procession?" said Cassius.

"No; not I," answered Brutus. "Still, let me not hinder you," added he, his lip curling, and just the faintest suspicion of irony in his voice.

"What mean you, Brutus?" asked Cassius earnestly. "I have not from you the show of love that once I had. You are of late too like a stranger to me, your friend that loves you."

"Cassius, be not deceived. I have been much vexed and troubled lately. That is all. If I have been neglectful, it is merely that poor Brutus has been



BRUTUS AND CASSIUS.

so much at war with himself, that he has forgotten the courtesies due to other men."

"Hear the shouting!" interrupted Cassius.

"What does it mean? I fear it may be that the ex-

cited people are offering to Cæsar the kingship of Rome."

"You *fear* it?" asked Cassius with an insinuating tone. "You mean then that you would not care to have it so."

"No," answered Brutus, "I would not care to have it so—and yet I love Cæsar, he is a noble man."

"O Brutus! Brutus! I would that you could see yourself. You are over modest. Do you not know that there are many in Rome who say that it would be well for Rome were Brutus this day the hero rather than the noble Cæsar?"

"And why, indeed, should it be that Cæsar's name be worshipped more than yours? Is it not as fair a name to write, as smooth a name to speak."

"Hark! there's another shout. A new honor do they heap on Cæsar."

And now Cassius, whose jealousy of Cæsar had long been rankling in his heart, burst forth :

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus ; and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
To find ourselves dishonorable graves.

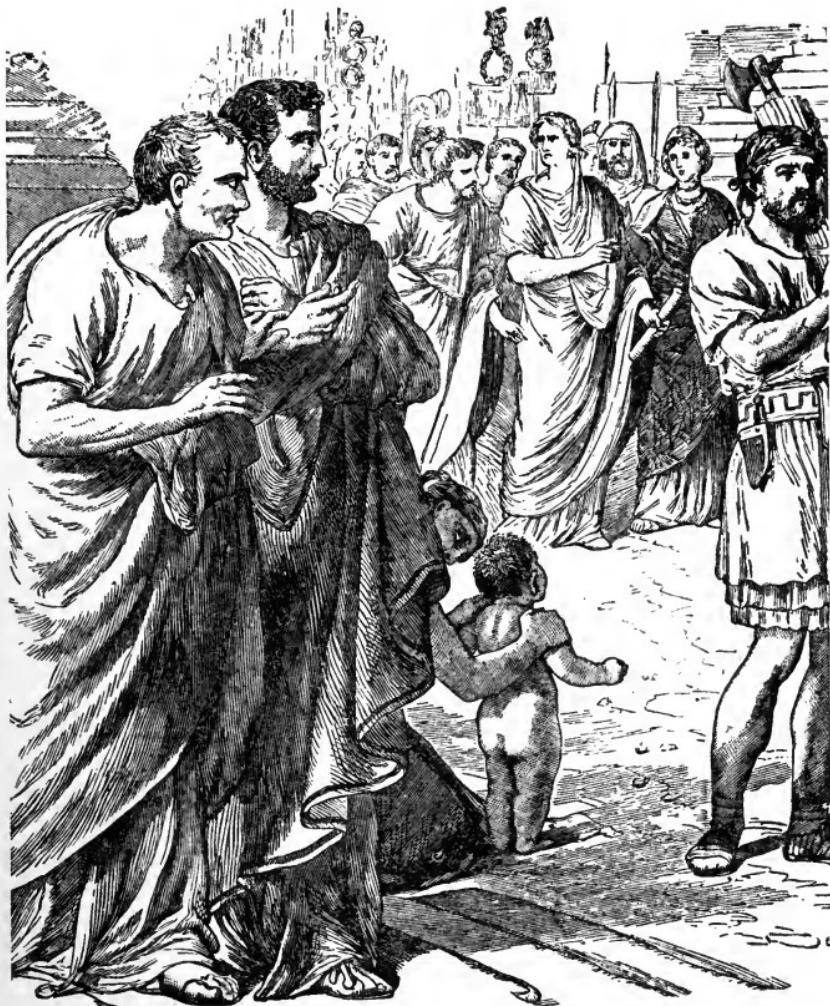
Men at some time are masters of their fates :
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.
Brutus, and Cæsar : what should be in that Cæsar ?
Why should that name be sounded more than yours ?
Write them together, yours is as fair a name ;

Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well ;
Weigh them, it is as heavy ; conjure with them,
Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Cæsar.
Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
Upon what meat doth this our Cæsar feed,
That he is grown so great ? Age, thou art sham'd !
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods !
When went there by an age, since the great flood,
But it was fam'd with more than with one man ?
When could they say, till now, that talk'd of Rome,
That her wide walls encompassed but one man ?
Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough,
When there is in it but one only man.
Oh, you and I have heard our fathers say,
There was a Brutus *once* that would have brook'd
The eternal devil to keep his state in Rome
As easily as a king.

This taunt roused Brutus. " You are my friend, I know, good Cassius. And what you say—I confess I have sometimes thought myself. I will consider what you have said."

" I am repaid," said Cassius, with a hypocritical show of deference, not wholly free from sarcastic meaning, " that my poor words have struck out even this much show of fire from Brutus. But see, the games are ended. The people come this way. When Casca comes along, let us draw him aside. He will tell us in his savage fashion what has happened while we stood here conversing."

" But look you, Cassius ; Cæsar has an angry look.



THE CONSPIRATORS.

And Calphurnia, his wife looks pale. And Cicero — his eye burns as if a-fire. I've seen him look like that when angry in the senate."

"Here comes Casca. Now we shall hear. Well, Casca, what has happened that Cæsar looks so sad?"

"Why, you were there, were you not?"

"Had I been there I should not be questioning you of what has happened."

"True enough. They offered him a crown, and he —he waved it away. Then the people fell to shouting."

"And the second time they shouted — why was that?"

"O, for the same reason. They offered him the crown again. Again he waved it back — again the worthy people shouted."

"And the third time they shouted — why was that?"

"For the same reason again ; and again our honest neighbors shouted."

"Who offered the crown?"

"Antony, of course!"

"Tell me how he did it, gentle Casca."

"I can as well be hanged, as tell the manner of it : it was mere foolery. I did not mark it. I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown ; — and as I told you, he put it by once ; but for all that, to my thinking, he would fain have had it. Then he offered it to him again ; then he put it by again ; but, to my thinking, he was very loth to lay his fingers off it. And then he offered it the third time ; he put it the third time by ; and still, as he refused it, the rabble hooted, and

clapped their chapped hands, and threw up their caps, because Cæsar refused the crown. And then he offered them his throat to cut.—An I had been a man of any occupation, if I would not have taken him at a word,—and so he fell. When he came to himself again, he said that if he had done, or said anything amiss, he desired their worships to think it was his infirmity. Three or four fools where I stood cried, '*Alas, good soul!*' and forgave him with all their hearts. But there's no heed to be taken of them ; if Cæsar had stabbed their mothers they would have done no less. O, there was much more of this same foolery, if only I could remember it. I'll come and dine with you to-morrow and tell you more. Till then, farewell."

"And Cassius, fare thee well," said Brutus as Casca moved away. "We will meet again to-morrow."

Cassius was far too wise to urge Brutus not to go. Wise schemer that he was, he knew that Brutus was touched with envy — that he was deep in thought — and that he would shut himself up in his home and brood upon what he had heard.

"Beware the ides of March," muttered Cassius, as he moved away. "Beware the ides of March."

And so a conspiracy was formed against "great Cæsar," led by Cassius and Casca. The honest Brutus was not easily won. Long days and nights he pondered on the plots the subtle, scheming Cassius set before him. And even when he joined the conspira-

tors, believing that it was for the good of Rome that Cæsar died,—even then he plead that they be merciful even in their cruelty, honorable even in their crime.

“ Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,
To cut the head off, and then hack the limbs,—
Let’s be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.
We all stand up against the spirit of Cæsar ;
And in the spirit of men there is no blood.
Oh, that we, then, could come by Cæsar’s spirit,
And not dismember Cæsar ! But, alas !
Cæsar must bleed for it ! And, gentle friends,
Let’s kill him boldly, but not wrathfully.
Let’s carve him as a dish fit for the gods.
Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds ;
And let our hearts, as subtle masters do,
Stir up their servants to an act of rage,
And after seem to chide them. This shall make
Our purpose necessary, and not envious.

THE IDES OF MARCH.

Such a night of terror as was the night preceding the murder of Cæsar ! The thunders rolled, the lightning flashed, the wind whistled and shrieked, great



CALPHURNIA PLEADING WITH CÆSAR.

trees fell, and buildings were shaken as by volcanic power.

"Who ever knew the heavens to threaten so," said

Casca. "And to-morrow the senators, they say, are determined to crown our mighty Cæsar, and this crown he shall wear by sea and land in every place save here in Italy."

"I know then where I shall wear my dagger," answered Cassius.

The morning came. "Cæsar," plead Calphurnia, "do not go forth to-day. Such terrible dreams as I have had about thee ! Such dreams of blood and murder ! of ghosts and death ! And then the heavens last night ! When beggars die there are no comets seen. The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes."

" Cowards die many times before their deaths ;
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear ;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.

" Still, I will not this day go forth. Ah, here is Decius. Decius shall bear my message. Say to them, Decius, that I will not come today. *Cannot* is false ; and *dare not* is falser. I *will* not come to-day."

" Tell them he is sick !" said Calphurnia.

" Shall Cæsar send a lie ? No, Decius, tell them simply that I will not come."

" Most mighty Cæsar," said Decius, a little scornfully, " let me know some cause, lest I be laughed at when I bear your message."

Cæ. The cause is in my will ; — I will not come ;
That is enough to satisfy the senate.
But, for your private satisfaction,
Because I love you, I will let you know :
Calphurnia here, my wife, stays me at home ;
She dreamt to-night she saw my statue,
Which like a fountain, with a hundred spouts,
Did run pure blood ; and many lusty Romans
Came smiling, and did bathe their hands in it.
And on her knee
Hath she begg'd that I will stay at home to-day.

Dec. This dream is all amiss interpreted ;
It was a vision, fair and fortunate ;
Your statue spouting blood in many pipes,
In which so many smiling Romans bath'd
Signifies that from you great Rome shall drink
Reviving blood ; and that great men shall press
For tinctures, stains, relics, and cognizance.
This by Calphurnia's dream is signified.

Cæ. And this way have you well expounded it.

Dec. I have, when you have heard what I can say ;
And know it now : the senate have concluded
To give this day a crown to mighty Cæsar.
If you shall send them word you will not come,
Their minds may change. Besides, it were a mock,
Apt to be render'd, for some one to say,
Break up the senate till another time,
When Cæsar's wife shall meet with better dreams.
If Cæsar hide himself, shall they not whisper,
Lo, Cæsar is afraid?

Pardon me, Cæsar, for my dear, dear love
To your proceeding bids me tell you this.

Cœ. How foolish do your fears seem now, Calphurnia !
I am ashamed I did yield to them.—
Give me my robe, for I will go :—

As Cæsar entered the Capitol he passed the soothsayer who had warned him of the ides of March.
"The ides of March are come," said Cæsar with a laugh.

"Ay, Cæsar,—but not gone !" answered the soothsayer, sadly.

But now the crowd pressed close around the Emperor. Each man, eager with some request, pushed his way to Cæsar's side. Now was the conspirators' chance. Casca's dagger flashes forth the first. Then another, and another, and yet another. Cæsar staggered forward. Then forward came Brutus, plunging his dagger into the very heart of Cæsar.

"And you, too, Brutus—you, my friend ?" cried he, wounded more by the treachery of his friend than by the dagger thrusts. "And you, too, Brutus !"

Then great Cæsar fell.

"Liberty ! Freedom ! Tyranny is dead !" shouted Cinna. "Liberty ! Freedom ! Enfranchisement !"

"People and senators," thundered forth Brutus, "fly not ! Stand still ! Ambition's debt is paid."

And now came Marc Antony, Cæsar's much-loved friend.



DEATH OF CÆSAR.

Ant. “ Oh, mighty Cæsar ! dost thou lie so low ?
Are all thy conquests, glories, triumphs, spoils,
Shrunk to this little measure ? — Fare thee well. —
I know not, gentlemen, what you intend,
Who else must be let blood, who else is rank :
If I myself, there is no hour so fit
As Cæsar’s death’s hour ; nor no instrument
Of half that worth as those your swords, made rich

With the most noble blood of all this world.
I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard,
Now whilst your purple hands do reek and smoke,
Fulfil your pleasure. Live a thousand years,
I shall not find myself so apt to die :
No place will please me so, no mean of death,
As here by Cæsar, and by you cut off,
The choice and master spirits of this age.

"Fear not, Marc Antony," cried Brutus.

"Though now we must appear bloody and cruel,
As, by our hands and this our present act,
You see we do ; yet see you but our hands,
And this the bleeding business they have done.
Our hearts you see not, — they are pitiful ;
And pity to the general wrong of Rome
(As fire drives out fire, so pity, pity,))
Hath done this deed on Cæsar. For your part,
To you our swords have leaden points, Marc Antony ;
Our arms no strength of malice ; and our hearts,
Of brothers' temper, do receive you in
With all kind love, good thoughts, and reverence.

Only be patient till we have appeas'd
The multitude, beside themselves with fear,
And then we will deliver you the cause
Why, I, that did love Cæsar when I struck him,
Have thus proceeded.

"I doubt not you are wise," answered Marc Antony,
bowing before Brutus, apparently in all good faith.

Let each man render me his bloody hand ;
First, Marcus Brutus, will I shake with you ;
Next, Caius Cassius, do I take your hand ;
Now, Decius Brutus, yours ;—now yours, Metellus ;
Yours, Cinna ;—and, my valiant Casca, yours :—
Though last, not least in love, yours, good Trebonius.
Gentlemen all,—alas !—what shall I say ?
My credit now stands on such slippery ground.
That one of two bad ways you must conceit me,
Either a coward or a flatterer.—
That I did love thee, Cæsar, O, 'tis true :
If then thy spirit look upon us now,
Shall it not grieve thee, dearer than thy death
To see thy Antony making his peace,
Shaking the bloody fingers of thy foes,
Most noble ! in the presence of thy corse ?
Had I as many eyes as thou hast wounds,
Weeping as fast as they stream forth thy blood,
It would become me better, than to close
In terms of friendship with thine enemies.
Pardon me, Julius !—Here wast thou bay'd, brave hart ;
Here didst thou fall ; and here thy hunters stand,
Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe.
O world ! thou wast the forest to this hart ;
And this, indeed, O world, the heart of thee —
How like a deer stricken by many princes,
Dost thou here lie !

"But, Antony, what, may we count on you ? Are
you our friend, or foe ?"

"I am your friend—friend to you all ; and I love you all. You will give me good reason why you killed great Cæsar—why you considered him dangerous."

"We will give you reasons," said Brutus, "else this were a brutal act. Such reasons will we give you, Antony, that were you Cæsar's son you would be satisfied."

"That's all I ask—that and one thing more—to speak as becomes a friend of Cæsar's at his funeral."

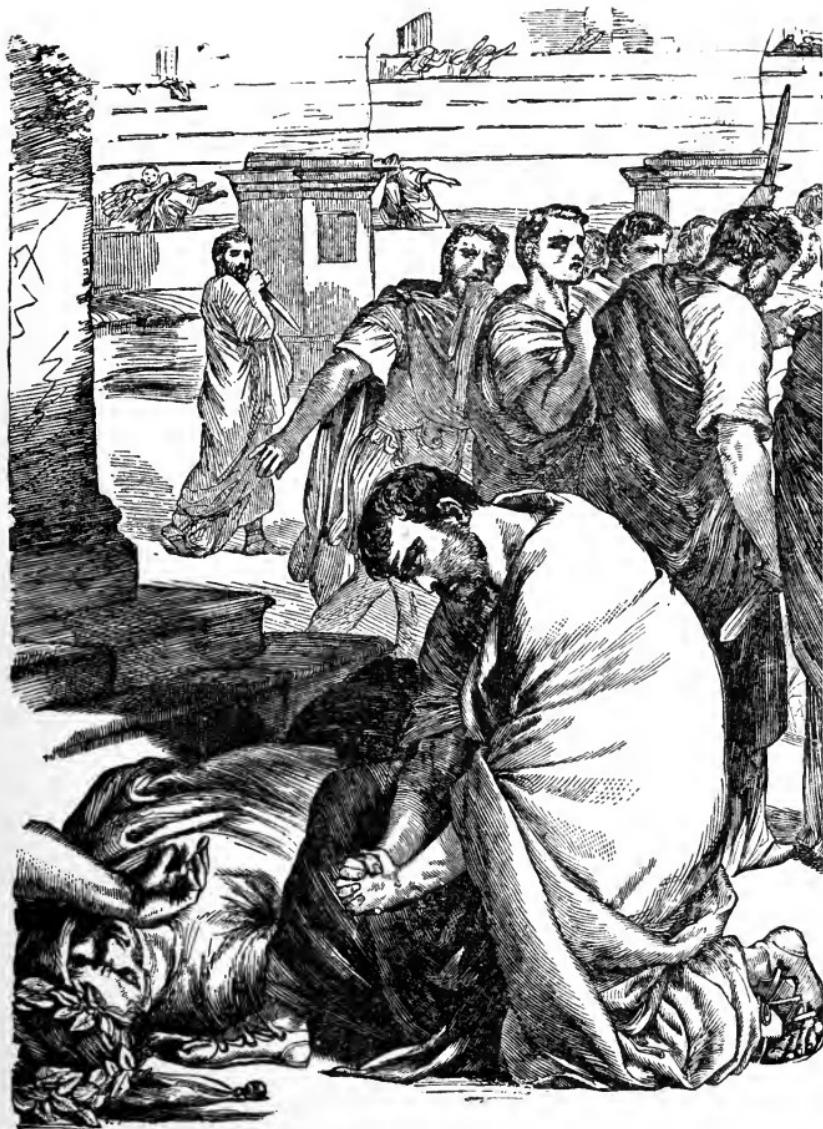
"You shall, Marc Antony ; and in your speech you'll say no ill of us, but all the good you may of Cæsar."

"'Tis all I ask."

"Prepare the body now and bring it after us," said Brutus ; "we go to get ready the people for the funeral speeches."

As the conspirators passed out, Antony bowed by the side of the dead body of his friend, crying,

"O, pardon me, thou piece of bleeding earth,
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers !
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived in the tide of times.
Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood !
Over thy wounds now do I prophesy,—
Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips,
To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue ;—
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men ;
Domestic fury, and fiercee civil strife,
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy :



MARC ANTONY.

Blood and destruction shall be so in use,
And dreadful objects so familiar,

That mothers shall but smile, when they behold
Their infants quarter'd with the hands of war;
All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds:
And Cæsar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
With Até by his side come hot from hell,
Shall in these confines, with a monarch's voice,
Cry, *Havock!* and let slip the dogs of war;
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
With carrion men groaning for burial."

CÆSAR'S FUNERAL.

As Antony sat by his dead friend, a servant entered bearing a message from Octavius, Cæsar's son, who stood outside the city with his army. "Go back with all speed to Octavius," said Antony, "and tell him what hath happened. Tell him not to enter the city until I learn through what I shall say at Cæsar's funeral, how the people will take this bloody deed. Then will I come to Octavius and together will we avenge this cruel murder. Help me now to carry this body to the Forum. See, already the people flock about Brutus, demanding justice.

"Hear! hear!" cried the people. "Tell us! tell us! Give back our Cæsar! give back our Cæsar!"

"Then follow me," said Brutus quietly; "follow

me, and I will tell you ; public reasons shall be rendered of Cæsar's death."

" Silence ! silence !" cried the people. " Brutus will speak ! Brutus will give us reasons ! "

Bru. Romans, countrymen, and lovers ! hear me for my cause ; and be silent, that you may hear : believe me for mine honor ; and have respect to mine honor, that you may believe ; censure me in your wisdom ; and awake your senses, that you may the better judge. If there be any in this assembly, any dear friend of Cæsar's, to him I say, that Brutus' love to Cæsar was no less than his. If then that friend demand, why Brutus rose against Cæsar, this is my answer :— Not that I loved Cæsar less, but that I loved Rome more. Had you rather Cæsar were living and die all slaves ; than that Cæsar were dead, to live all freemen ? As Cæsar loved me, I weep for him ; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it ; as he was valiant, I honor him ; but as he was ambitious, I slew him : There ~~is~~ tears for his love ; joy for his fortune ; honor for his valor ; and death for his ambition. Who is here so base, that would be a bondman ? If any, speak ; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude, that would not be a Roman ? If any, speak ; for him have I offended ? Who is here so vile, that will not love his country ? If any, speak ; for him have I offended. I pause for a reply.

" None, Brutus, none," cried the citizens.

Bru. Then none have I offended. I have done no more to Cæsar, than you should do to Brutus. The question of his death is enrolled in the Capitol; his glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy; nor his offences enforced, for which he suffered death.

Here comes his body, mourn'd by Marc Antony; who, though he had no hand in his death, shall receive the benefit of his dying, a place in the commonwealth. As which of you shall not? With this I depart: That as I slew my best lover for the good of Rome, I have the same dagger for myself, when it shall please my country to need my death.

"Live, Brutus, live!" cried one.

"Bring him with triumph home unto his house," cried another.

"Give him a statue with his ancestors," cried a third.

"Let him be Cæsar," cried a fourth.

"We'll bring him to his house with shouts and clamors," shouted another.

"My countrymen,—" said Brutus.

"Peace, silence! Brutus speaks."

"Peace, ho!"

"Good countrymen, let me depart alone," continued Brutus, when he could be heard,

"And, for my sake, stay here with Antony.
Do grace to Cæsar's corse, and grace his speech

Tending to Cæsar's glories ; which Marc Antony
By our permission, is allow'd to make.
I do entreat you, not a man depart,
Save I alone, till Antony have spoke."

"Stay, ho ! and let us hear Marc Antony," cried
the easily excited mob.

"Let him go up into the public chair ;
We'll hear him.—Noble Antony, go up."

"For Brutus' sake, I am beholden to you," said
Antony, sadly.

"What does he say of Brutus ?"

"He says, for Brutus' sake, he finds himself beholden
to us all."

"Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here."

"This Cæsar was a tyrant."

"Nay, that's certain ; we are bless'd that Rome is
rid of him."

"Peace ! let us hear what Antony can say."

"Peace, ho ! let us hear him."

"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears ;
I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them :
The good is oft interred with their bones ;
So let it be with Cæsar. The noble Brutus
Hath told you Cæsar was ambitious :
If it were so, it was a grievous fault ;
And grievously hath Cæsar answer'd it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest,
(For Brutus is an honorable man ;
So are they all, all honorable men).

Come I to speak in Cæsar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful and just to me :
But Brutus says he was ambitious ;
And Brutus is an honorable man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill.

Did this in Cæsar seem ambitious ?

When that the poor have cried, Cæsar hath wept ;
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious ;
And Brutus is an honorable man.

You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which he did thrice refuse. Was this ambition ?

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious ;
And, sure, he is an honorable man.

I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.

You all did love him once,— not without cause :
What cause withdraws you, then, to mourn for him ?
Oh, judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. — Bear with me ;
My heart is in the coffin there with Cæsar,
And I must pause till it come back to me.”

“ Methinks there is much reason in his sayings,”
said a citizen thoughtfully.

"Mark ye his words? He says he would not take the crown," said another. "But hark! again he speaks."

"But yesterday the word of Cæsar might
Have stood against the world; now lies he there,
And none so poor to do him reverence.
O masters! if I were dispos'd to stir
Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,
I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,
Who, you all know, are honorable men.
I will not do them wrong; I rather choose
To wrong the dead, to wrong myself, and you,
Than I will wrong such honorable men.
But here's a parchment, with the seal of Cæsar;
I found it in his closet, 'tis his will:
Let but the commons hear this testament,
(Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,)
And they would go and kiss dead Cæsar's wounds,
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood;
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills
Bequeathing it, as a rich legacy,
Unto their issue."

"Let's hear the will! let's hear the will!" shouted the mob. "The will! the will!"

"Have patience, gentle friends, I cannot read it. It is not well that you know how Cæsar loved you. You are not wood, you are not stone, but men; and

being men, hearing the will of Cæsar, it will make you mad. 'Tis good you know not you are his heirs. For if you should, O, what would come of it !"

"The will ! the will !" shouted the mob again. "Read us the will !"

Again Marc Antony began :

"Be patient. I fear I have o'er shot myself to tell you of the will. I fear I wrong the honorable gentlemen whose daggers have stabbed great Cæsar."

"The will ! the will ! they were murderers, villains," screamed the mob. "The will, the will !"

"Let us make a ring about this corpse of Cæsar." "Nay, do not crowd. Stand back, and I will read the will."

"If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.
You all do know this mantle : I remember
The first time ever Cæsar put it on.
'Twas on a summer's evening, in his tent ;
That day he overcame the Nervii : —
Look ! in this place ran Cassius' dagger through :
See, what a rent the envious Casca made :
Through this, the well-beloved Brutus stabb'd ;
And, as he plucked his cursed steel away,
Mark how the blood of Cæsar follow'd it ;
As rushing out of doors, to be resolv'd
If Brutus so unkindly knock'd, or no ;
For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's angel :
Judge, O you gods, how dearly Cæsar lov'd him !

This was the most unkindest cut of all ;
For when the noble Cæsar saw him stab,
Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
Quite vanquish'd him. Then burst his mighty heart ;
And, in his mantle muffling up his face,
Even at the base of Pompey's statue,
Which all the while ran blood, great Cæsar fell.
O, what a fall was there, my countrymen !
Then I, and you, and all of us, fell down,
Whilst bloody treason flourish'd over us.
O, now you weep ; and, I perceive, you feel
The dint of pity ; these are gracious drops.
Kind souls, what weep you, when you but behold
Our Cæsar's vesture wounded ? Look you here,
Here is himself, marr'd as you see, with traitors.

“ O piteous spectacle ! ”

“ O noble Cæsar ! ”

“ O woful day ! ”

“ O traitors, villains ! ”

“ O most bloody sight ! ”

“ We'll be revenged : revenge ; about,— seek,— burn,—
fire,— kill,— slay ! — let not a traitor live.”

Ant. Stay, countrymen.

“ Peace there ! Hear the noble Antony.”

“ We'll hear him, we'll follow him, we'll die with him.”

Ant. Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up
To such a sudden flood of mutiny.

They that have done this deed are honorable :

What private griefs they have, alas, I know not,

That made them do it ; they are wise and honorable,

And will, no doubt, with reasons answer you.
I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts ;
I am no orator, as Brutus is.
But as you know me all, a plain blunt man,
That love my friend ; and that they know full well
That gave me public leave to speak of him.
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
To stir men's blood. I only speak right on ;
I tell you that which you yourselves do know ;
Show you sweet Cæsar's wounds, poor, poor dumb mouths,
And bid them speak for me. But were I Brutus,
And Brutus, Antony, there were an Antony
Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue
In every wound of Cæsar, that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.

“ We'll mutiny.”

“ We'll burn the house of Brutus.”

“ Away then, come, seek the conspirators.”

Ant. Yet hear me, countrymen ; yet hear me speak.

“ Peace, ho ! Hear Antony, most noble Antony.”

Ant. Why, friends, you go to do you know not what.
Wherein hath Caesar thus deserv'd your loves !
Alas you know not. I must tell you then :—
You have forgot the will I told you of.

All. Most true ; the will :— let's stay, and hear the will.

Ant. Here is the will, and under Cæsar's seal.
To every Roman citizen he gives,
To every several man, seventy-five drachmas.”

“ Most noble Cæsar !— we'll revenge his death.”

“ O royal Cæsar !”

Ant. Hear me with patience.

“ Peace, ho !”

Ant. Moreover, he hath left you all his walks,
His private arbors, and new-planted orchards,
On this side Tiber ; he hath left them you,
And to your heirs for ever ; common pleasures,
To walk abroad and recreate yourselves.

Here was a Cæsar. When comes such another ?”

“ Never, never :— Come, away, away ;
We'll burn his body in the holy place,
And with the brands fire the traitors' houses.”

“ Take up the body.”

“ Go, fetch fire.”

“ Pluck down benches.”

“ Pluck down forms, windows, anything.”

And away the excited people rushed. “ And now,” said Cæsar's friend, as he looked once more upon the dead body before him “ now mischief is afoot. Let it take what course it will. I will to Octavius. Dear Cæsar, this murder shall be avenged !”

WAR BETWEEN THE CONSPIRATORS AND OCTAVIUS.

It was not long before armies were formed and drawn up in deadly battle.

It was the night before the battle of Philippi, the battle in which Brutus fell, and Octavius thus revenged his father's death, that Brutus, heartsick and weary of this war, quarrels and "makes up" again with his friend Cassius. In this quarrel it is the same noble Brutus and the same selfish Cassius.

Bru. Remember March, the ides of March remember.
Did not great Julius bleed for justice' sake?
What villain touch'd his body, that did stab,
And not for justice? What! shall one of us,
That struck the foremost man of all this world
But for supporting robbers, shall we now
Contaminate our fingers with base bribes,
And sell the mighty space of our large honors
For so much trash as may be grasp'd thus?—
I had rather be a dog, and bay the moon,
Than such a Roman.

Cas. Brutus, bay not me,
I'll not endure it: you forgot yourself
To hedge me in; I am a soldier, I,
Older in practice, abler than yourself
To make conditions.

Bru. Go to; you are not Cassius.

Cas. I am.

Bru. I say you are not.

Cas. Urge me no more, I shall forget myself;
Have mind upon your health, tempt me **no farther**.

Bru. Away, slight man!

Cas. Is't possible?

Bru. Here me, for I will speak.

Must I give way and room to your rash choler?

Shall I be frightened when a madman stares?

Cas. Oh, ye gods, ye gods! must I endure all this?

Bru. All this! ay, more: fret till your proud heart break; Go show your slaves how choleric you are, And make your bondmen tremble. Must I budge? Must I observe you? must I stand and crouch Under your testy humor? By the gods, You shall digest the venom of your spleen, Though it do split you; for, from this day forth I'll use you for my mirth, yea, for my laughter, When you are waspish.

Cas. Is it come to this!

Bru. You say you are a better soldier.

Let it appear so; make your vaunting true, And it shall please me well; for mine own part, I shall be glad to learn of noble men.

Cas. You wrong me every way; you wrong me, Brutus; I said, an elder soldier, not a better. Did I say better?

Bru. If you did, I care not.

Cas. When Cæsar liv'd, he durst not thus have mov'd me.

Bru. Peace, peace! you durst not so have tempted him.

Cas. I durst not!

Bru. No.

Cas. What! durst not tempt him?

Bru. For your life you durst not.

Cas. Do not presume too much upon my love; I may do that I shall be sorry for.

Bru. You have done that you should be sorry for.

There is no terror, Cassius, in your threats ;
For I'm arm'd so strong in honesty,
That they pass by me as the idle wind,
Which I respect not.. I did send to you
For certain sums of gold, which you denied me ;—
For I can raise no money by vile means.
By Heaven, I had rather coin my heart,
And drop my blood for drachmas, than to wring
From the hard hands of peasants their vile trash
By any indirection. I did send
To you for gold to pay my legions,
Which you denied me : was that done like Cassius ?
Should I have answered Caius Cassius so ?
When Marcus Brutus grows so covetous,
To lock such rascal counters from his friends,
Be ready, gods, with all your thunderbolts,
Dash him to pieces !

Cas. I denied you not.

Bru. You did.

Cas. I did not. He was but a fool that brought
My answer back.— Brutus hath riv'd my heart.
A friend should bear his friend's infirmities,
But Brutus makes mine greater than they are.

Bru. I do not, till you practise them on me.

Cas. You love me not.

Bru. I do not like your faults.

Cas. A friendly eye could never see such faults.

Bru. A flatterer's would not, though they do appear
As huge as high Olympus.

Cas. Come, Antony, and young Octavius, come,

Revenge yourselves alone on Cassius,
For Cassius is a-weary of the world ;
Hated by one he loves ; brav'd by his brother ;
Check'd like a bondman ; all his faults observ'd,
Set in a note-book, learn'd, and conn'd by rote,
To cast into my teeth. Oh, I could weep
My spirit from mine eyes ! — There is my dagger,
And here my naked breast ; within, a heart
Dearer than Plutus' mine, richer than gold ;
If that thou be'st a Roman, take it forth ;
I, that denied thee gold, will give my heart.
Strike, as thou did'st at Caesar ; for, I know,
When thou did'st hate him worst, thou lov'dst him better
Than ever thou lov'dst Cassius.

Bru.

Sheathe your dagger.

Be angry when you will, it shall have scope ;
Do what you will, dishonor shall be humor.
O Cassius, you are yok'd with a lamb
That carries anger as the flint bears fire ;
Who, much enfore'd, shows a hasty spark,
And straight is cold again.

Cas.

Hath Cassius liv'd

To be but mirth and laughter to his Brutus,
When grief, and blood ill-temper'd, vexeth him ?

Bru. When I spoke that, I was ill-temper'd too.

Cas. Do you confess so much ? Give me your hand.

Bru. And my heart too.

Cas.

O Brutus,—

Bru. What's the matter ?

Cas. Have not you love enough to bear with me,

When that rash humor which my mother gave me
Makes me forgetful?

Bru. Yes, Cassius; and, from henceforth,
When you are over-earnest with your Brutus,
He'll think your mother chides, and leave you so.

Cas. Good night, my lord.

Bru. Good night, my brother, good night.

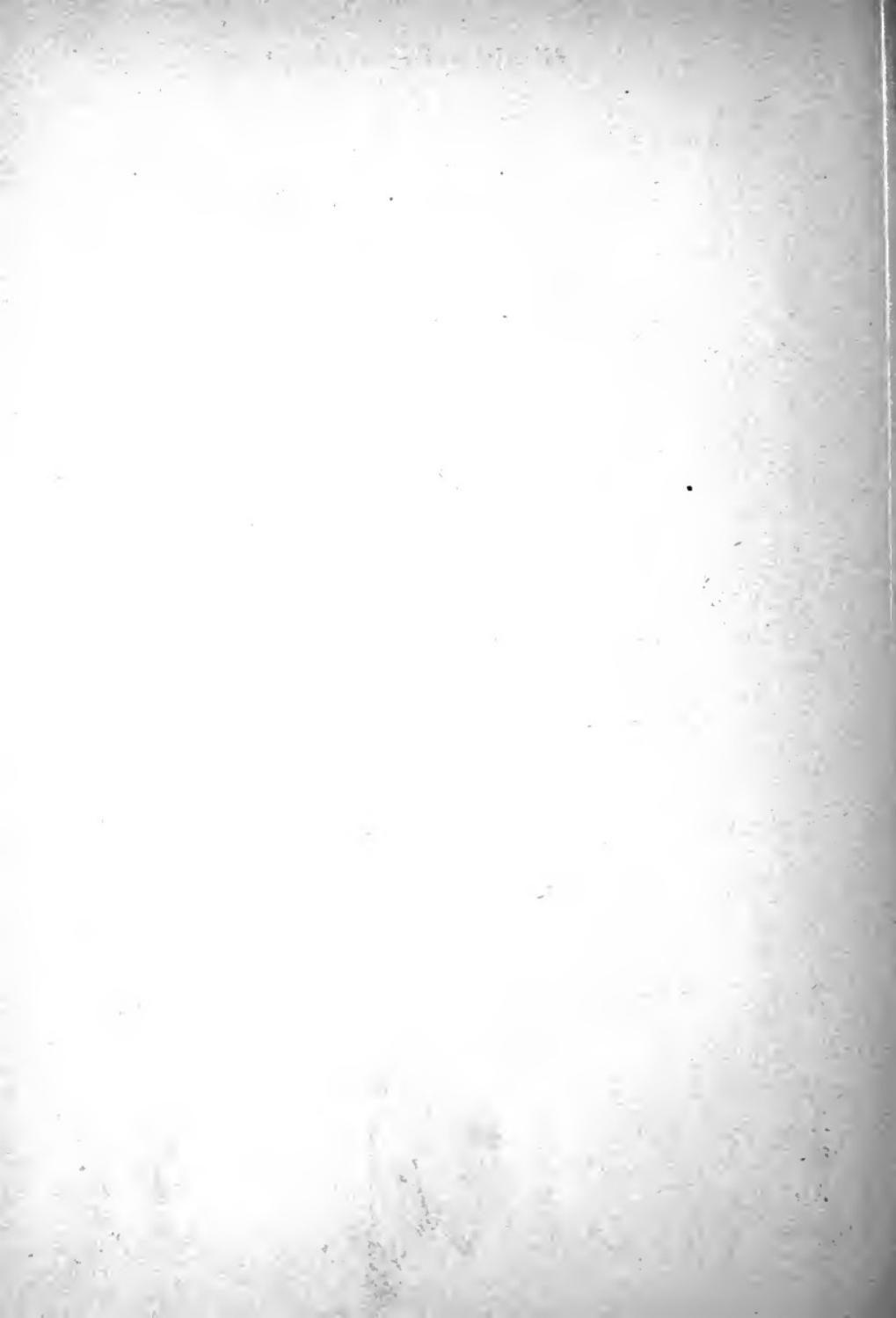
We need not dwell upon the next day's battle. It was a bloody fight. Cassius is brought before Brutus slain. Bowing over the dead body, he cried, "The last of all the Romans, fare thee well!

It is impossible that ever Rome
Should breed thy fellow.—Friends, I owe more tears
To this dead man, than you shall see me pay.—
I shall find time, Cassius, I shall find time.—
Come, therefo. e, and to Thassos send his body
His funerals shall not be in our camp,
Lest it discomfort us.—Lucilius, come;—
And come, young Cato;—let us to the field.—
Labeo and Flavius, set our battles on:—
"Tis three o'clock; and, Romans, yet ere night
We shall try fortune in a second fight."

In the battle that followed, Brutus was taken prisoner. But it was not in the character of Brutus to be carried a prisoner of war back to Rome. "Better a thousand times for me that I fall upon my sword," said he, "and so I shall have glory even in this day of loss."



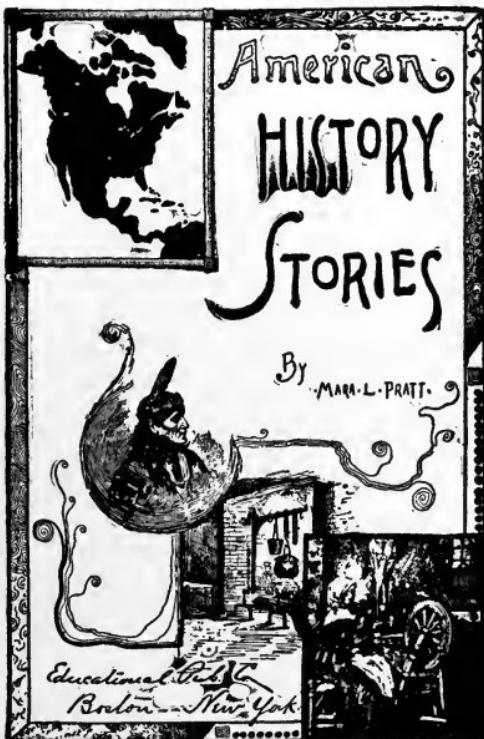
And Antony, as he stood beside the outstretched body of his noble foe, said, tenderly and reverently,
“ This was the noblest Roman of them all.
All the conspirators, save only he,
Did that they did in envy of great Cæsar ;
He only, in a general honest thought,
And common good to all, made one of them.
His life was gentle ; and the elements
So mix’d in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, ‘ This was a man ! ’ ”



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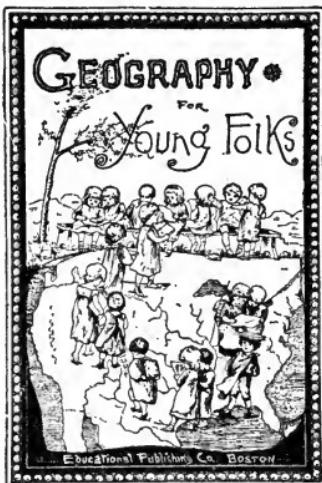
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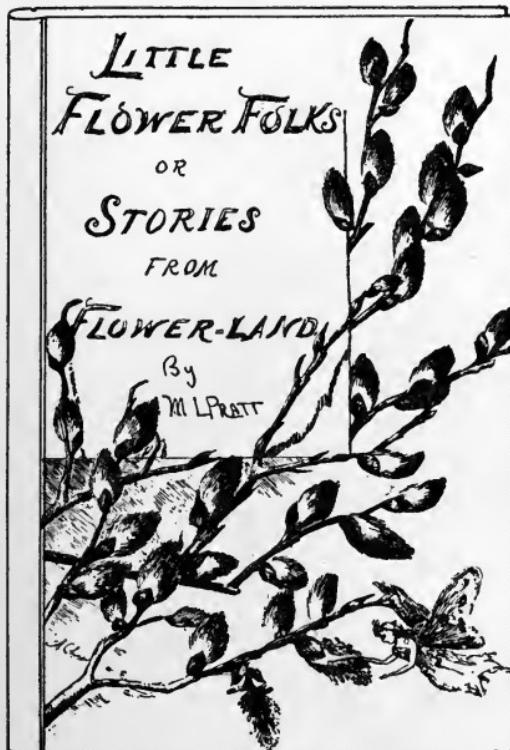
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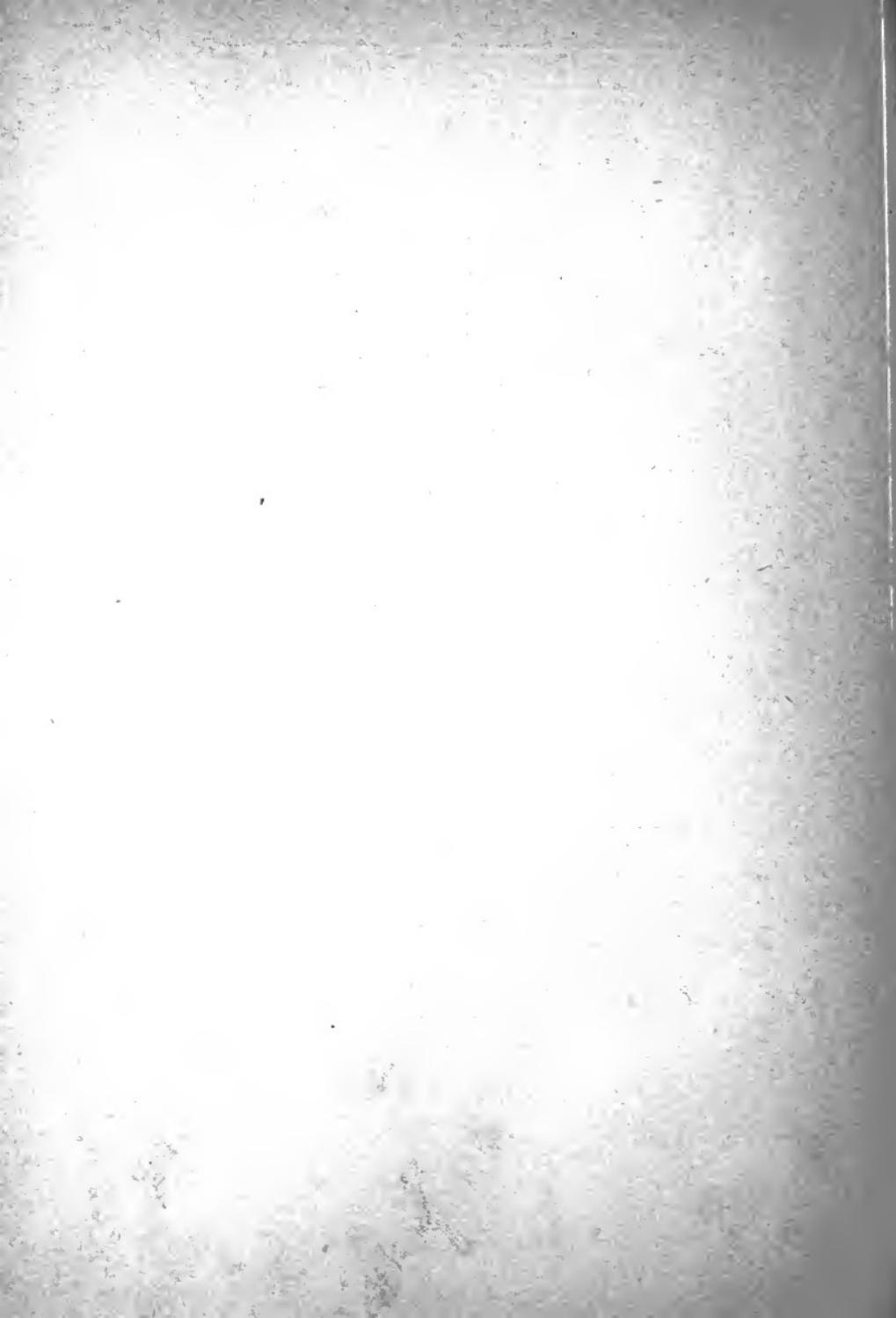
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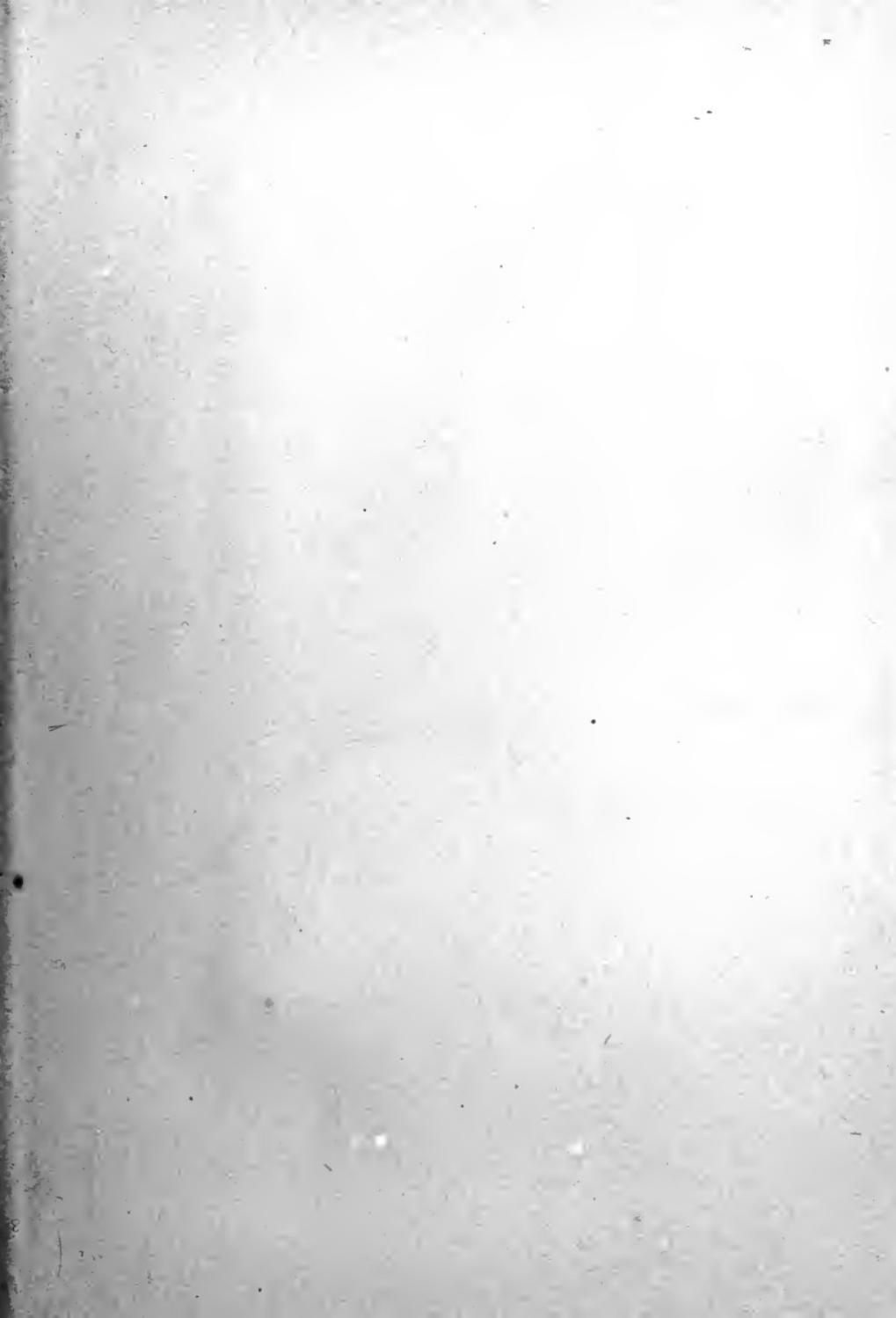
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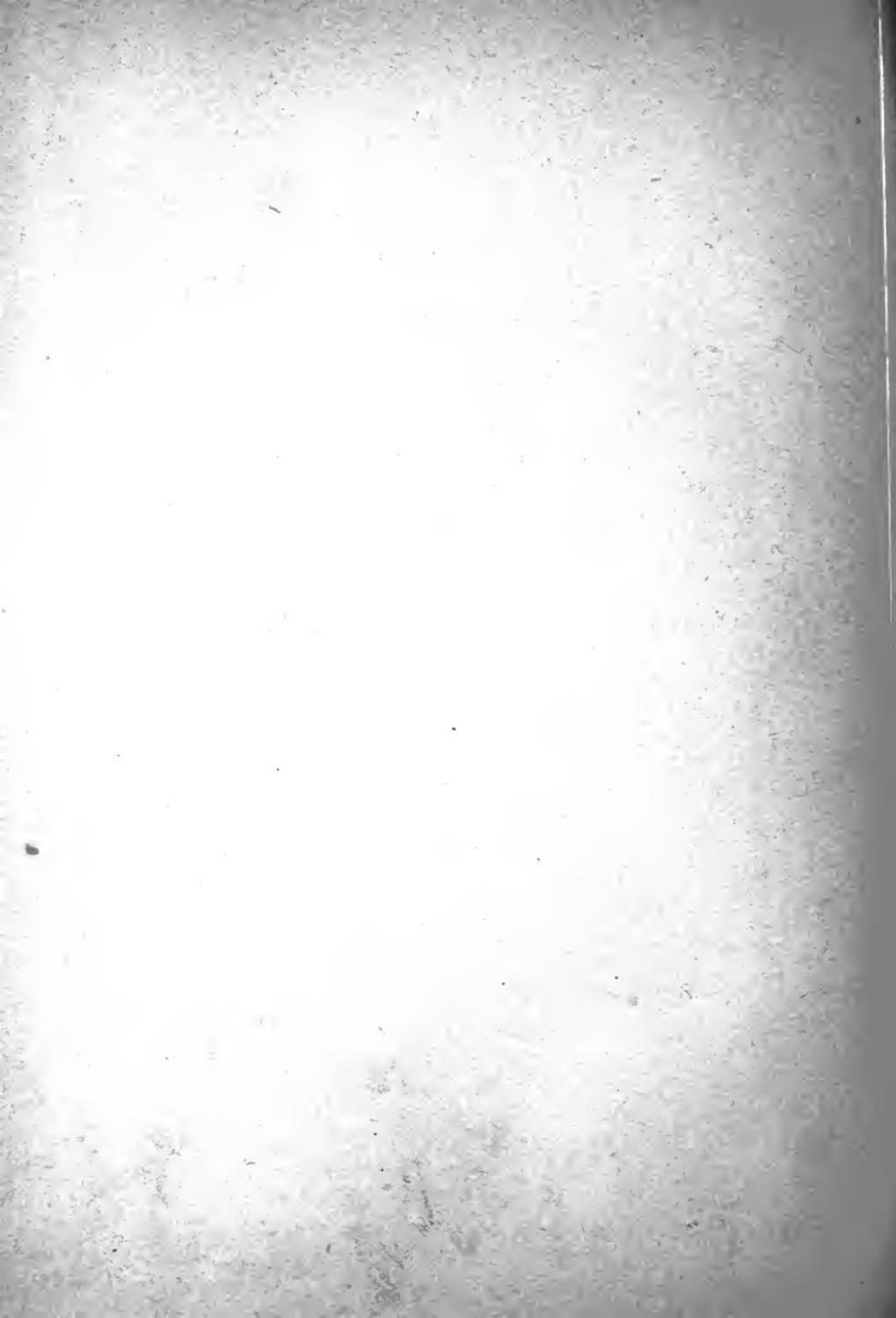
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